THE
MODERN CHURCHMAN

By identifying the new learning with heresy, you make orthodoxy synonymous with ignorance.—*Erasmus.*

A State without the means of change is without the means of its conservation.—*Edmund Burke.*

Nos. 4, 5 & 6. JULY—SEPTEMBER, 1943. Vol. XXXIII.

THE TWENTY-SEVENTH CONFERENCE OF MODERN CHURCHMEN

By the Editor.

ON July 26-29, in Somerville College and Regent's Park Baptist College, Oxford, the Modern Churchmen's Union held its 27th Conference. The 26th Conference at Girton College, Cambridge, had been abruptly and prematurely terminated by the announcement of Hitler's invasion of Poland. Our 27th Conference opened auspiciously with the announcement of the downfall of Mussolini.

The attendance was large, applicants for membership exceeding accommodation by some 30 per cent. — one of the tragedies of success which might have been avoided had so many applications not been deferred until the last moment. A spirit of optimism and fellowship permeated the proceedings of the Conference — 'a gracious interview of friends so long divided.'

'The National Church and the National Life' was the theme of the Conference papers and discussions. All the papers read at the Conference are published in this issue of the *Modern Churchman.* The programme was as follows:

The National Church and the National Life.
Sir Cyril Norwood.

The Function of Religion in the National Life.
Rev. J. C. Hardwick.

The National Church as a Teacher of Christian Truth.
Very Rev. W. R. Inge.

The National Church and Divine Worship.
Rev. Canon R. D. Richardson.

National Christian Reunion. Rev. W. G. Fallows.

The Relations of Church and State.
Rev. Chancellor J. S. Bezzant.

The National Church and Education. Rev. L. B. Cross.

The Parson as Politician and Economist.
Rev. Gamaliel Milner.

The Layman's Rights and Duties. Sir Francis Fremantle.

The Conference Sermon by the Rev. V. J. K. Brook will be included in our next number.

Whilst the spirit of the Conference was optimistic, this optimism was no doubt partly the reflection of the bright hopes produced by the great improvement in the war situation, and partly the reflection of the bright hopes aroused by the Government's education policy, especially in the sphere of religion.

The ideals of Modern Churchmen can only be realized in an educated community. It is in such a community that modern churchmanship is needed, and it is in such a community that it can render most valuable service. 'The gods themselves contend in vain against human ignorance.' Religious ignorance in a community must mean that the Church either falls a victim to palsied superstition or is engulfed in the black night of materialistic atheism. A rising standard of national education, in which religion is imparted with the same sincerity and thoroughness as in other departments of human knowledge, provides a secure foundation for that religious purgation, simplification and co-ordination of which the religious institutions in our country stand in such serious need to-day.

In estimating the influence of our National Church upon our national life, we are compelled most unwillingly to recognize that it is a declining influence. In this connection we are compelled to ask the question whether the National Church ought to be content to be the Church only of a minority of the nation. We have assumed that the Church is only a minority, but we are not entirely convinced that such is the case, since our English census—unlike the census in our Dominions—does not include religious returns.

Whilst this census restriction prevails in England, we are forced to rely upon a number of other religious statistics which have neither the security nor the authority our Government could provide by altering its out-of-date census method.

Although we cannot be sure that the National Church is an actual minority of the nation, of this at least there seems to be no doubt, that it is a declining moral and spiritual force in the national life. There are a number of Christians who will maintain that this is only what is to be expected. Human nature is so constituted that it naturally prefers evil to good. This may be due to the 'original sin' of the theologians or to the 'brute heredity' of the scientists, but such is the constitution of human nature that, save in exceptional circumstances, we must expect vice rather than virtue, deterioration rather than progress. The Christian call, therefore, 'Friend, come up higher,' must be normally met by the response, 'I am quite comfortable where I am, thank you.' Did not Jesus Christ himself say, 'Many are called, but few are chosen'? Did He not say, 'Strait is the gate and narrow is the way that leadeth unto life and few there be that find it'? Dean Inge's comment, 'The narrow way will never be crowded,' like Cardinal Newman's *dictum*, 'A popular Church is always a corrupt Church,' expresses a pessimistic estimate of human nature.

If these estimates be right, then it can neither surprise us, nor disconcert us as Christians, that our National Church is a declining moral and spiritual influence in the national life, since such a decline does not indicate that there is anything wrong with the Church or its methods. What is wrong is human nature, and the Creator is not without responsibility for that. The ideal of human perfectibility and of human moral and spiritual progress is merely the last and greatest of heresies. If this be the view that the National Church takes of the situation, present and future, it plainly has no gospel for the nation, nor for mankind at large, but only for a few elect individuals in a lost world. The command 'Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature,' ought to have appended to it 'Be not discouraged if the great majority of human beings reject the Gospel, since the Creator has so planned his creative process that only a very few can be saved.'

Are we sure that this line of reasoning is sound? Is it not possible that this pessimistic outlook is not really Christian? When St. Paul turned from the Jews who rejected the Gospel, he said to them :

> 'Be it known therefore unto you that the salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles and that they will hear it' (*Acts* xxviii, 28).

When the Apocalyptic Seer related in visions the stages of the

conflict between the Church and the world, he heard a divine voice saying :

> 'The kingdom of the world is become the Kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign for ever and ever.'

The Seer also wrote :

> 'After these things I saw, and behold a great multitude which no man could number of every nation, and of all tribes and peoples and tongues standing before the throne and before the Lamb, arrayed in white robes and palms in their hands.'

Plainly there is a conflict of evidence in the New Testament. Can it not be reconciled by recognizing that when Jesus Christ spoke of the few on the narrow way He was not predicting a condition of affairs which must continue for ever, but was merely describing a contemporary situation? In His day 'the broad way which leadeth unto destruction' was crowded with masses of Zealots, Sadducees, Pharisees, to say nothing of Pagan Gentiles, while those who were accepting His Gospel were very few indeed. There is no indication, however, that He thought that this must always be the case. Indeed, just the contrary. The little grain of mustard seed that He was sowing—the smallest of all the seeds sown by the farmer —would produce a plant so large that even the birds of the heaven would come and build their nests in it. The leaven of the Gospel, hidden in the three measures of meal of human society, would continue its secret and penetrating influence until the *whole* was leavened.

This, we take it, is the spirit which ought to inspire the preachers of the Christian Gospel who pray daily 'Thy Kingdom come on earth as it is in heaven.' If the effect of that Gospel in human history cannot be described as 'going forth conquering and to conquer,' there is something wrong somewhere — not with the Gospel originally entrusted to the Church, but with the Church's transmission and presentation of that Gospel to mankind.

If this estimate of the Christian Gospel and of its mission to mankind be correct, the Christian Church may well ask, when it discovers itself to be a declining power in human society, 'What must I do to be saved, in order that I may save mankind?' There is, we believe, no fundamental reason in the nature of things why the National Church should not become in most influential fashion the Church of the English nation. If this be not achieved, the fault is primarily in the Church itself—not in the nation to which it is appointed to minister.

It may surprise many who have listened to ecclesiastical condemnations of human nature to learn that there is no vilification of human nature by Jesus Christ in the record of His teaching in the

Gospels. He who could urge His hearers to act that they might become children of the Highest cannot be supposed to have urged them to attempt the impossible.[1] Christ's criticisms and condemnations in the Gospels are levelled not at ordinary human beings, including the publicans and sinners whose friend He was, but at the professionally religious people who were making entrance into the Kingdom of God far more difficult for the great mass of human beings than the Gospel of Jesus demanded. The complaint of that Puritan saint, Richard Baxter, that

> 'The plague of the Church for a thousand years has been the enlarging our Creed and making more fundamentals than God ever made,'

is equally true of Church practice to-day. The National Church, if it is to win back the nation, needs a vast simplification and that in every sphere. It needs to stress the great essentials of faith and practice, and not to surround the great fundamentals of the Christian Faith with a multitude of petty incredibilities which tend among ordinary men to make the Christian Faith incredible. The same is true in the sphere of Christian practice: 'Ye tithe anise and mint and cummin.' As a consequence, the Church gets the reputation of being more concerned about the small than the great, about the ecclesiastical rather than the human, about the incredible rather than the universally and eternally true in human experience. It is Church leadership which has the courage and wisdom to face and reform this state of affairs that alone can make the National Church the Church of the English nation.

[1] The passage: 'if ye being evil know how to give good gifts unto your children, etc.' (*Mt.* vii, 11) ought to be rendered: 'if you who are hard business men are yet generous to your children, how much more will your Heavenly Father be generous to you in response to your prayers.'

THE NATIONAL CHURCH AND THE NATIONAL LIFE

By Sir CYRIL NORWOOD, President of St. John's College, Oxford.

WHEN I contemplate the flood of discussion on religion which has flowed with increasing volume throughout the years since the last war, and now rises to new levels as we pass in this war from the end of the beginning to the beginning of the end, when I meditate on all that will be argued 'for' and 'against' even in this modest conference of our own, I chasten myself with a saying which is, I believe, to be ascribed to Ambrose: 'It hath not pleased the Lord to give His people salvation in dialectic.' The emotions and not the reason move nations and churches, and policies, which reason commends, are not possible, if they conflict sharply with the interests and loyalties that we inherit from our past, and hold to be self-evident and true because at bottom we find ourselves made that way. I base upon this not any attempt to belittle the value of pure reasoning, but merely the hope that here in this Oxford Conference, as well as elsewhere, we shall be patient and tolerant if need be, even agreeing to differ. I hope indeed that our Conference may prove to be like that walk which Carlyle took with a friend—I think it was John Sterling—of which he wrote that they found themselves of one mind 'except in opinion, not disagreeing.'

Still, looking back on the last thirty years, I feel that in religion, politics, education, and economic policy, we have been always at the cross-roads, always confronted with a choice of objective, never finding ourselves on a good metalled road on which we can march together in a definite direction which we know and approve. We move through a never-ending valley of indecision, but we do not stay still. We go on moving, and when we look back we can see that we have come what is often a surprisingly long way. It is always a time of crisis, always an emergency, and there is one good thing about an emergency that it is always an opportunity, if you like to make it so. Such is the position to-day. There is an Education Bill about to be presented to Parliament, and the National Church has to decide what part it is going to play in the National Education of the future. There is the conflict between Individualism and Socialism, with the tide apparently setting strongly against old values and in favour of new. Is the National Church to range itself under the one banner or the other? There is the problem of the reconstruction of Europe and indeed

the whole world-order. Is it the duty of all members of the Church to be of one mind on this great issue? Must a Christian be a politician, and a member of one party, on pain of being held to be a bad Christian? If Christians are to make themselves felt, if they are to be effective in bringing nearer the establishment of the Kingdom of God on earth, must they not first find their way to reunion, or, as I would prefer to put it, to the establishment of unity in the bond of peace? Must not the National Church in many ways set its own house in order before it can lead the nation?

With several of these problems you will be dealing, and at a favourable time. I call it favourable in this sense, that the whole nation has been brought up sharp against stark realities, and has learned by its own sacrifice and suffering what power-politics based on dogmatic materialism mean, how doubtful can be the chances of survival for mankind of freedom, happiness, and well-being. The whole nation is seeking after God, if haply it may find Him: their ears are ready to hear. But as yet, if I am not wrong, there has been no revival of religion. Only the first preparatory stage has been reached: there has been a great revival of discussion about religion among men and women of all ages, much argument 'about it, and about,' much criticism of the nation on the one hand, and of the National Church on the other. But the new integration of the Christian gospel which will compel the allegiance of twentieth-century mankind has not yet been defined. There is nowhere in sight a Luther, much less a St. Paul. We can but feel and say that the conditions are favourable, and that the Spirit bloweth where it listeth.

Let us look at the position a little more closely, and ask first whether, when one surveys the field of the national life, there is such a thing as with tolerable truth we can call the national Church? By law it is in this country the Established Church of England. But cross the border to the North, and it becomes the Presbyterian Church of Scotland; cross the border to the West, and you find that it is no established Church at all; cross the sea to the West, and you reach an island which as to the major part of it I prefer to leave in its own self-chosen isolation. It must be allowed that to the foreigner this makes a sufficiently odd position at the outset, but it becomes confusion worse confounded when you look beneath that confused pattern to see into how many schools of thought, how many sects and cliques the company of the faithful has degenerated. You may start with the Hind and the Panther, but the Christian Ark contains many other strange animals, who will not even walk two by two. The further down you go in the scale of what I may venture to call sectarian biology, the greater the intolerance, the greater the fervour with which it is proclaimed that they, and they only, are authentic Christians, the greater the heat with which they

deny that anybody else can be right. I had thought that education and the spread of modern culture had banished all this fanatical intolerance, but my experience since 1940 as a member of the Appellate Tribunal of Conscientious Objectors has taught me otherwise. There does exist in this country what Bishop Henson has called the Protestant underworld, and as a well of Christianity, it is somewhat lacking in the quality of truth, and it cannot be called undefiled. One of the first steps to the revival of Christianity as the national religion will be the banishment of ignorance. Many do not know what Christianity is, and it is not surprising, all things considered, that this should be the case.

It is at this point that I will say briefly what I have to say about education. I do not wish to enter into a detailed discussion of the subject, since I have had opportunities of writing in the pages of the *Modern Churchman*, and some of you will know what I think about immediate policy. What the State means to offer to the Church is competent instruction according to a syllabus agreed among a number of the Churches for all children up to the age of fifteen or sixteen in the Bible and the Christian Gospel. I deliberately choose to say that it *means* to offer this, because it may find itself obstructed by the Church itself, or some over-influential section of it, and it certainly will find itself obstructed in the initial stages by insufficiency of supply of teachers both in numbers and quality. This obstacle can in time be overcome, and what a difference it would make if all children up to the age of sixteen received regular and skilled instruction in the Christian gospel in classes of reasonable size. But this does not mean that the schools are going to take upon themselves the whole duty of making the nation Christian. It will not usher in an age when the Church can sit back, and feel that it has nothing to do. The Church has to address itself to the task of producing good teachers in larger numbers from better and more liberal training-colleges, or from University courses in which the students are not left wholly without spiritual care. It has to go on unceasingly with the work of improving its own Sunday schools, and to develop study-groups among the young. It has to make Confirmation more real. In a word the clergy themselves must needs take the teaching side of their office more seriously, for the State Schools will provide them only with the raw material for the making of Christian citizens. The home and the Church must do the rest, and there is a great campaign to be fought in the work of re-Christianizing the homes of Britain. A generous and broad-minded forward policy in the whole educational field is needed, and an ungrudging acceptance of co-operation with the State. Now is the time to seize the opportunity; opportunity, as the Latin line has it, is bald behind.

Let us return to our contemplation of the nation and the

national life. It is argued by many that you must not dismiss the nation as pagan and un-Christian because it does not go to church. The truth is that probably the majority would like to be married in church, to have their children Christened in church, and to be buried by the church. Otherwise they prefer to stay away for a great variety of reasons and excuses, usually affecting an uncritical broadmindedness which conceals a pretty extensive ignorance of the true nature of Christianity: they define it quite wrongly, partially, and ignorantly, and then say that they have no use for it. In nine cases out of ten they say that they accept the ethical teaching of Jesus Christ, but they do not accept doctrinal teaching or they are out of sympathy with it.

> 'For modes of faith let graceless zealots fight,
> He can't be wrong whose life is in the right.'

That is the creed of the average Englishman, and he calls himself a member of the Church of England in most cases because, as Professor Brogan says, he likes the parish church to be the one from which he stays away, and not any other rival place of worship. It must be admitted that this indictment is in great part true, and that it is straining language to call this drifting mass either Churchmen in any real sense, or Christians in any full sense. But the condemnation of them often goes too far, and there is a touch of the highbrow Pharisee too often in the criticisms which I read. All sorts of simple things which ordinary folk do when they are together, and which they like doing, offend the truly religious: they cannot stomach the Two Minutes' Silence, they are offended by the School Chapel, and above all, the community singing of 'Abide With Me' at the Aldershot tattoo stinks in their nostrils. They compare these with the high experiences of the mystic and the purest devotion of the sacramentalist, and they say that these popular sentimentalisms are not religion at all. They are not, but they are on the way to it. Emotion more than intellect is at work in both cases, and it is not for either side to cast a stone at the other. Let us not forget that the history of the Church in what are called the ages of Faith is not all of it very edifying reading.

Ordinary men and women may be very ignorant, though the Church is not altogether free from blame in that matter: they may be both very sentimental at certain times and in certain circumstances, and very materially-minded and vulgar at others. But it is a dangerous over-statement to write and speak, as some do now too frequently, as if the Church, by which they really mean that section of Christians who think like themselves, were a small minority in pagan surroundings faced with the necessity of reconverting a heathen England. There is a sense, and a true sense, in which this is true of the Church in every age since the days of

its Founder, and He never taught us to expect anything else: 'Strait is the gate, and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.' That is one of His sayings, and separated by but a very few verses, 'Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, but he that doeth the will of the Father which is in heaven.' After all, quite a number of these nominal Christians have not flinched in these past three years: they have known how to lay down their lives for their friends. The nation, taken as a whole, has been faced with a great moral issue, and has never wavered even in the darkest hour, though some hours have been very dark. Granting all the faults of the vague and occasional religiosity of the majority of the English people, they are not heathen: they respect Christ and His teaching, though they do not know much about it, and can seldom express what they do know. They are in my poor opinion a much finer race by Christian standards than the Church is justified in expecting. If they are ignorant, they can be taught: if they are estranged, they can be won over. But somehow or other I do not think that this work will be accomplished by a National Mission of the saints to the sinners, or, as unkinder critics might say, of the Pharisees to the publicans. Saints are unfortunately very rare, but Pharisees are still common. In these matters it is a good thing never to forget that example counts far more than precept.

So it is worth while to pause and consider what qualities the simple Church-going folk of this country do require of their clergy, not in the abstract, but in the concrete needs of day to day and Sunday to Sunday intercourse. It happens that my own college exercises a good deal of patronage, mostly in rural parishes with a fairly wide distribution. I think that it is significant that when a vacancy arises, and the Parochial Church Council is free to send in a statement of the qualities which they hope for in their new incumbent, these statements follow an almost common form. In the first place they ask for a man who does not label himself with any badge of ecclesiastical party, and who is not an extremist: in the second, they ask for one who will be a friend, visiting them and sympathizing with and seeking to understand their lives: in the third, they seek one who will interest himself in the young people, and they very frequently add that these are out of hand. I repeat that I think this to be significant. The strength of the National Church has lain in the simple lives of a loving ministry lived by countless unknown parish priests. Even in the very dead days of the eighteenth century Goldsmith could draw his ideal picture of

> 'the man to all the country dear,
> And passing rich with forty pounds a year';

and, though it is now usual to picture those days, not without

justification, as a period of spiritual torpor in the Church, there must have been a good many who set an example such as that which Goldsmith idealises or he could not have written as he did. And there continued to be such in the nineteenth century: there are still such to-day. But the parochial system has broken down in the great cities, and in the country the clergy are set to face increasingly impossible conditions. Here lies one of the great dangers of the future which may gravely impair the influence of the Church. I do not develop it here, for the point that I am making is rather that the laity who do go to church, and are for the most part simple and uncritical believers, look for an example of loving fellowship and sympathy, and I cannot but think myself that their instinct is profoundly right.

Not all the laity, however, are simple and uneducated. There is a large body which is fully educated, expert in some branch of learning or in some profession, well-read in modern thought, in natural science, in economics, in psychology, to name but three of the developments which shape the modern world: in each it would be a good thing if the average clergyman knew more than he does. It is of course quite impossible within the limits of this opening address to deal fully with the problem presented by the relations of Christian Theology to modern thought. I can but draw your attention to the editorial note in the current number of the *Modern Churchman* on 'Three Autobiographies and their Religious Significance,' a note with which I am in whole-hearted agreement. All the three autobiographers are distinguished scholars, and reveal alike that the Christian religion has played an important part in forming their character. Two were Anglo-Catholics, still own the aesthetic attraction of Catholic worship, but have ceased to accept Christianity as an interpretation of the Universe. One was an Unitarian, but has become one 'whose faith has centre everywhere nor cares to fix itself to form.' One of them says bluntly:

> 'I should be equally false to the conviction of my whole being, and to the conclusions reached over many years, if I did not also say that, so far as I am concerned, and as far as most men of my generation are concerned, Christian theology is a hindrance to understanding.'

I believe this statement to be quite literally true of very many thinking men and women, and the editorial note from which I am quoting goes on to define what is one of the most important problems which confront the National Church in its relation to National Life, whether the policy which the Church should follow should be one of reaction or of liberalism.

It is passionately contended on the one side that the answer of the Church to modern agnosticism should be not less dogma but

more, that people like ourselves, and the movement for which we stand, are the cause of the present weakness of traditional Christianity, and that the situation will never improve until the Church takes its stand quite uncompromisingly on the Faith, the whole Faith and nothing but the Faith. It is an issue which cannot be evaded. We must stand on one side or the other, and I do not hesitate to stand on the side of Liberalism, even though it may be out of fashion in Church circles at the present time. The imposition of full dogmatic orthodoxy will mean not the revivifying of the Church, but quite inevitably its falling out from the main stream of national thought and life. Our answer should be in the words of our editor, which I will venture to quote in full:

> 'Christian liberalism can alone save the situation. A flexible, adaptable, expanding Christian faith is what is needed. Such a liberal Christian faith will postulate Divine creativity even though the physical scientists doubt and deny it — which, as a matter of fact, they do not for the most part to-day. Such a Christian Faith will strive to discern the Divine Will realising itself in the course of human history, even though the late H. A. L. Fisher and those who follow him find no convincing evidence for it. Such a Christian Faith will act on the conviction that the Christian ideal of life, if loyally realised in ourselves, our institutions, our social and political policies, can alone secure the best results. Where the Christian Faith is held in this simple undogmatic and experimental form it possesses in a modern educated and progressive community a survival value and a conquering power which are not possessed by more complicated, rigid, dogmatic forms of the Christian religion.' [1]

This is a fundamental decision which is of supreme importance, but it is not in my opinion the problem which will burn most hotly in the immediate future. The issue which will be most hotly debated is the question how far the Christian Church ought to take part in politics, how far and in what way. We are building, or there is being built for us, a New Order — Hitler's, or Stalin's, or the Atlantic Charter. It will probably not be any one of the three, but we do mean, the overwhelming majority of this nation means, that it shall be a more Christian order than that which is now passing away in violence. And therefore the Church is brought into direct relation with the main problems of the national life, and on each of them honest Christians are likely to be divided. Let us be quite open about it. On these problems we in this Union are likely to be divided, and indeed have been sharply divided already. There are three such issues, and I will state them in the following terms. Does Christianity demand that the path to be followed for the future shall be the path of uncompromising pacifism? Does Christianity demand the abolition from our economic system of the motive of private profit, and from our social system of the exist-

[1] *The Modern Churchman*, June, 1943, p. 10.

ence of classes? Does Christianity demand the abolition of full national sovereignties from the world-organization of the future, and the liquidation of all or most of what is popularly known as the British Empire? These are all problems to which the Christian citizen must apply his mind in the light of his Christianity, all problems to which the nation must address itself in the near future, all problems on which enthusiasts feel that there can be no compromise. When one speaks of the National Church and the National Life, one cannot ignore these questions and pretend that they do not exist.

On the first question, that of pacifism, it is possible for a Christian to hold that the Sermon on the Mount applies to public as well as to private enemies, and to form with mystical intensity the conviction that by absolute refusal to use force combined with absolute refusal to obey wrongful orders through passive resistance we should be following the only way which will establish peace on earth. It is also possible for a Christian to believe that a sinful world does not offer a choice of this character, but only a choice between what is bad and what is worse, and the man who will not resist violent evil must in effect yield to it, and so bring suffering not only on himself but on all his neighbours. I am not going to argue the question or to dwell on the fact that the great majority of Christians have in historic times up to the present day taken the view that a Christian may rightly take up arms, and serve his country, in a war which his conscience declares to be just. I am merely concerned to say that the State in allowing the right of conscientious objection to military service has taken the same view as that held by the Christian Church, and that here we have two honest but conflicting opinions which may be sincerely entertained by Christians without bringing into question their loyalty to Christ.

The seventh aim of our Union is stated in the form that we seek to promote Christian principles in public as well as in private life, and no one will deny that it is the duty of all Christians so to do, unless he belongs to that school of Christian thought which holds that this world is so evil that the Christian must have no concern in it. But it remains true for all that that on such questions as our economic system, and the continued existence of classes, there will not be merely two opinions, but almost an infinite number, at any of which, as it seems to me, a man who is judging honestly by Christian standards may arrive. When our Archbishops, greatly daring, declare that the time is ripe for the limitation of the rate of interest, they may be right or wrong, and Christians will take both these views about their pronouncement with fervour and intensity, as indeed they manifestly have done.

When on the other hand the Archbishop of Canterbury told the nation that there is a grave decline in national standards both of ordinary honesty and of sexual morality, there were among Christians, as far as I know, no signs of two opinions : he had exercised his entirely proper function, that of boldly rebuking vice. I quote these instances from our recent experience as illustrative of the two spheres in which the Church can speak, in the one case, with an undisputed authority, and in the other, with a very different kind of authority, not greater, I think, than the deserved personal influence of the man who speaks. Of two Christians whom I know, who went to South Wales and surveyed at first hand the distressed areas, one joined the Socialist party as a result, and one the young Conservatives, each alike from conviction that the true path of Christian progress lay along their respective party lines. These things being so, when each of us is able to multiply instances indefinitely from his own experiences, it would be surely intolerable if it were held that you could not be a Christian unless you were a Socialist, if membership of a political party were made a test of orthodoxy. I have heard it said, though it is now a quarter of a century ago, that the Church of England is really the Conservative party at prayer : I am much more likely to hear it said to-day that it is the Socialist party at prayer. Both statements alike ought to be inapplicable to our national Church, which has always been tolerant of honest differences, even to the point which makes it unintelligible to the logical foreigner. Therein it has shown its wisdom, a wisdom perhaps greater than it knew. In these coming days, both within our Union and in that wider society of Christians to which we belong, the National Church, we must strive to be tolerant of one another, not breaking off fellowship because in difficult problems we come to conclusions which are as policies irreconcilable.

Again, we are all in favour of the Atlantic Charter, but when we come to the task of working out its general Christian principles in detail, we shall find that we are in exactly the same case, and that the opinions of Christians may and will honestly differ. It was the same with the League of Nations. I expect that the history of many in this room must have been the same as my own, in that in its first ten years I supported it with enthusiasm, and in the next ten I was more and more beset with doubts, with the feeling that what had once seemed a practicable ideal had become merely a piece of wishful thinking, and then the increasing certainty that as a piece of sham pretending to be real it had become in effect a danger to all who put their trust in it. It may be that, taught by the terrible lessons of 1939 and 1940, Christians will be more realist in building the European system of the future : some Christians

at any rate will be. And it is certain that there will be many prophets and many policies. I cannot myself on all these questions where we seek to apply Christian principles to public life get further than the statement that it is the business of each man who professes and calls himself a Christian to apply these principles honestly for himself and to be fearless in doing so. And when he finds other Christians differing from them, I hold him justified in telling them that they are mistaken and in seeking to prove that they are so. But I do not hold him justified in telling them that they are un-Christian, and moved by unworthy motives. I am therefore sure that the National Church would be wrong if it identified itself as such with any political party, and that it would thereby lose its proper authority and influence. It should tolerate within itself conflicting opinions, as I hope that, however sorely tried, we shall continue to do within our own Union.

But if the National Church is to make its witness effective with the nation, it needs to set its own house in order in some directions, and to gain a new heart in others. Nothing so much hinders the Church, and indeed Christianity in general, from having the effect on the nation and the world which it should have as the divisions of Christians. These divisions are sharp and sometimes bitter within the Church itself : the Anglo-Catholic and the Evangelical do not lie down together. Outside the National Church are all the other Churches, and many fair words are spoken to them : action, however, in accordance with these fair words is markedly rare, and the Church of England is more to blame for this than the Free Churches. It is the ninth aim of our Union 'to maintain the historic comprehensiveness of the Church of England and to foster fellowship and co-operation in Word and Sacrament with other Christian Societies.' But I know, and many of you must also know, that when interchange of pulpits is sought on suitable occasions by the wish of an incumbent and his parishioners, it is discouraged too often from higher quarters, and declared to be suitable only for occasions so special that there is a probability that they will never occur. I remember that once when a prominent member of this Union accepted an invitation to preach in a famous Congregational Chapel, the vicar of the parish in which I was then living, and in which the chapel was situated, held a special service of remorse to rid the parish of the stain of such apostasy. He could hardly have done so to-day, but the spirit which animated him still persists, and it stultifies all the language which the Church uses about fellowship.

I need not go into all the difficulties that are made about inter-communion on special occasions, or the intolerance of such obviously sensible attempts at getting together as the scheme for

Southern India. All this is disastrous to the influence of any Christian Church, but especially of one that claims to be national. When Christianity itself is at stake, as it literally is in the world of to-day, it is folly to keep in repair and try to strengthen fences of separation which had their origin in historic differences now half-forgotten and meaningless. I associate myself whole-heartedly with all that Canon Raven said on this vital issue in his address to Liberal Evangelical Churchmen in February of this year: I hope that we all do. The practice, which has now become almost a tradition, of making broad pronouncements of apparent good-will, and of then doing nothing to implement them, is damaging more than the National Church: it is doing real injury to Christianity. We should not seek so much formal reunion as unity, the unity, as I have quoted before, in the bond of peace. And all that is mere words unless we can show in practice from time to time that Churchmen do not regard Free Church ministers as too schismatic to occupy their pulpits, that Churchmen can kneel with other Christians from time to time at the Lord's Table. It is perhaps too much to hope that the bishops as a body could invite the communicants of all Christian Churches to receive the Holy Communion in the Church of England, if they so desire. But I think that few actions would help the cause of real Christianity in this country more surely and more effectively. Let us hope that I am wrong: let us hope that not for long shall the dead past continue to stifle the living present.

I have spoken of setting the house in order, and it is a great need that the Church should recruit a clergy of better quality, wider education, and more learning than those whom at present it succeeds in enlisting. It is a great need that it should not sit back and watch the steady decline in clerical incomes, the steady reduction of the parochial clergy to a position in which they cannot inhabit their houses without financial anxiety, or educate their families as they should be educated. It is true that a few able men seek ordination from year to year. But the numbers required to fill the ministry are not maintained, and the general educational standard is low. Some of the causes may be beyond the control, or at any rate the immediate control, of the Church authorities; but they could at least set in motion seriously a movement for bettering the financial position of the clergy. Poverty does not matter, but penury does: the resources of the Church, and the liberality of Churchmen, ought to be able to free the clergy as a whole from the worries, the petty anxieties, the limited life which, continuing from year to year, sap their freshness and render them progressively ineffective. The National Church is right in having a married clergy, and the nation in every field of its activity has been

the gainer thereby. Nothing can be more short-sighted than to let the present conditions continue indefinitely, and indeed to get steadily worse, as they are doing: thereby quality must inevitably be impaired, and it is my case that on the quality of the ordinary incumbent in the average parish, his family, his way of life, and the example which he sets from year to year depends the influence of the Church on the nation.

I am not going to speak of Disestablishment beyond registering my opinion that it would from our point of view, the view of those who believe in tolerant comprehensiveness, prove to be disastrous. It is however an academic question: things are not moving that way. Nor do I wish to stand before you to-night as one who is pessimistic. On the contrary, though there are certainly very difficult days in front of the Church and the nation, I am at bottom optimistic. It is, I know, usual to say, and it is hard to deny, that the Christianity which is abroad in the nation to-day is a vague thing with no particular belief in anything and with a quite open mind about survival after death. The man in the street sees nothing '*sub specie aeternitatis*.' It is not Christianity in any sense which described that religion in the nineteenth century, or the eighteenth, or any of the past centuries. The Bible is not real: it is unfamiliar. It is declining and evaporating year by year, a mere veneer of Christian ethics inherited from the past and fated to dry and crack off. I do not accept this gloomy picture. I look to the spread of education, a real education continuing for all up to the threshold of adult life: I look to the splendid quality of the young people, and the very general interest which they show in finding, if they can, a spiritual basis for life. Much is doomed to dry and crack off, and perhaps Lord Morley was right in thinking that the Christianity of the future will be related to the traditional Christianity that we know much as the Christianity of the first century was related to Judaism. The issue is not decided: the struggle has continued for long, and will continue: we need faith, hope, and charity. I cannot do better than end this preliminary review by quoting a moving passage with which Alfred Fawkes ended his remarkable little book on *The Genius of the English Church*. It was written more than twenty-five years ago, but it does not date, for the struggle goes on:

> 'They speak perhaps more truly than they know who tell us that for the English Church the time in which we live is critical; that she has come to the parting of the ways. For the larger call is in her ears: she may hear it, and follow: or she may be deaf to it, and refrain. In other words, she may resign herself to the distinctive and denominational position of a mere Anglicanism, or she may rise to her higher calling, and stand for English Christianity as a whole. In the former case, "Abide ye here with the ass" will be her programme. It is a poor one. She will not

rest on her past; she will appeal to the stationary elements of society — the unthinking, the unintelligent, those who for one reason or another stand outside the main stream of life. She may continue for a time to influence the imagination and the sentiment of a section of the nation: she will probably approximate more and more to mediaeval doctrines and ceremonial: by her claim, disputable as it is, to be (in the sectarian sense of the word) Catholic, she may retain a handful of enthusiasts whose natural gravitation is towards Rome. But this road leads nowhere. A Church which takes it may be long in dying, but is on the road to die. In the other case a great, a very great, destiny awaits her — the furtherance of the religious life of the English people at home and beyond the seas. Her characteristic "*Via Media*" is not, and is not likely to become, a middle term between Rome and Protestantism: the changes that are taking place in Latin Christendom do not look her way. But "reformed the least" of the Reformed Churches, and inheriting the political genius of the nation to which she owes her distinctive features, she may unite for her own people the best elements both of the old order and of the new. Should it be so, it is not England only that will be the greater: the *vasti luminis orae* will receive increase.'

THE FUNCTION OF RELIGION IN THE NATIONAL LIFE

By the Rev. J. C. Hardwick, M.A., B.Sc., author of *Lawn Sleeves, No Casual Creed,* etc.

RELIGION played a large part in the national life of England in the Middle Ages, in the Tudor period, and during the reigns of the earlier Stuarts and the Commonwealth. The Civil War was largely fought over religious issues. By the time of Charles II, however, religion as a central interest was beginning to be displaced by commerce and science. The Royal Society was founded just before the Restoration, and it was now felt that if heretics were good customers, their errors might be overlooked. During the eighteenth century religion retired still further into the background, though there were learned and philosophic bishops to commend it to the reason of mankind. Tolerance had grown, but it was the tolerance bred by indifference. Probably the observation of Gibbon — 'The various modes of worship which prevailed in the Roman world were all considered by the people as equally true, by the philosopher as equally false, and by the magistrate as equally useful' — reflects the attitude of his contemporaries of the English governing class. The Evangelical movement has been described as a kind of backwash from this eighteenth century rationalism, while the Methodist movement affected chiefly the lower middle class and that social and cultural underworld known then as 'the lower orders.' In the nineteenth

century the Oxford Movement was a backwash from the 'liberalism' of the Reform Act, and affected only the clergy and a narrow minority of the educated upper classes. The part played by religion in England during the nineteenth century, in spite of active and energetic prelates like Samuel Wilberforce, was a minor one, and gradually diminishing at that, the serious interests being business and politics, or, in the case of the vast majority, the pressing necessity to make a living. The primary non-serious interest, as it might be termed, was sport in the case of every class of society.

The twentieth century has witnessed, however, a revival of religious interest; not only in the traditional religion, but in new cults of a secular, this-worldly type; for both Fascism and Communism are genuine religions, characterized by all the fanaticism, intolerance, irrationality and cruelty which had debased the traditional religion at its worst periods. As at the time of the Reformation, there now opened a period of religious wars, marked by the atrocities invariably accompanying such conflicts. The point to note about these new religions, whose god is the State, is that their emergence cannot be attributed either to mere propaganda or to chance, but is a product of certain tendencies in modern industrial society which affect every nation in greater or less degree — for these tendencies are indubitably present even in the type of State that is styled a democracy, though not always so visible to the naked eye.

An industrialized society is of necessity highly organized, and is indeed a complex mechanism composed of a number of subordinate mechanisms, industrial, political, military and social — which mechanisms tend to get wider in scope, more firmly established, and more rigid in operation. In these vast and complex social mechanisms which exist around us and touch the life of the individual at every point, the place of that individual is bound to be a very subordinate one, approximating more and more to that of a cog in a machine. He thus exchanges the status of an unique individual for that of a standardized and interchangeable unit; and whatever value he may have he will derive not from any inherent nature of his own but from his place and function in the machine, apart from which his value is nil. Thus the modern totalitarian State would appear to be not so much the product of a particular ideology, as of tendencies inherent in modern industrial society.

The doctrine that the individual is of primary value, though it may receive some lip-service, is in reality not popular to-day, at least not with those who are shaping our destinies. Collectivist ideas are the vogue, while individualism is bankrupt. It was

pointed out by Josiah Royce a good number of years ago in *The Problem of Christianity* that one of the paradoxes of modern civilization is that it leads to solitude rather than 'community' in proportion as it grows in mechanical complexity and industrial efficiency. Modern 'mass' civilization completely swamps the individual, and yet provides no natural free fellowship, so that he feels lost and alone. Collectivism does not mean fellowship, since it depersonalizes human relationships. The individual, bewildered, lonely and fatalistic, finds his saviour in his real oppressor, the omnipotent State, which gives him back, in a debased and unnatural form, the natural and spontaneous strength of which it has robbed him.

The function of a satisfying religion should be, then, to give back to the individual human being two things of which he has been robbed, (1) his individuality, and (2) fellowship or 'community,' though the two things are not, in practice, separable, since man is a social animal and finds his true self in living with and for others. The characteristic feature of the primitive Christian churches was that they did provide these two things, namely, 'community' or fellowship, and an assurance for the individual that he was of supreme value. The doctrine of the supreme value of the individual took the form of a belief in every man's potential sonship to God and attainment of immortality; while 'community' took the form of *agape*—a warm fellowship which multiplied the powers of the individual and made him feel that he had entered upon a new life. Thus primitive Christianity was far from being a form of escapist pietism, though it did repudiate the world as it then was. It involved participation in a full and satisfying life here and now, and was not individualistic, but essentially a community-religion. It consisted in the life of a society, a fellowship of believers which was 'the body of Christ.' One was a Christian by virtue of being a member of 'the beloved community,' but membership multiplied the powers of the individual, whether of achievement or endurance. Thus primitive Christianity was a community religion which made powerful individuals, in contrast to modern society, whether 'capitalist' or 'collectivist,' which destroys 'community' and depresses and isolates the individual.

The Christian Church as it exists to-day affords a certain contrast to these primitive communities. Various sections of society regard it in their several ways. The 'common people' look upon it as a time-honoured organization for sanctifying birth, marriage, and death, which function barely manages to justify its continued existence in their eyes. In another grade of society its function is held to be the upholding of morality, the inculcation of decent behaviour, and the instilling of right principles into the young. In

addition to this the churches are generally expected to perform a certain amount of what may be termed ambulance work, trying to deal with the human waste products of society.

Such functions are not without importance, but the situation now is that they are being taken over to an ever increasing extent by the State, which in some respects has itself become a church. In matters of birth, marriage and death, the registrar has taken over the functions of the priest. The State's social services render charitable ambulance work increasingly redundant. Education of every grade is being taken over by the State, and this now includes the inculcation of morals. Local education authorities have begun to give instruction in sexual hygiene to adolescents; young men and women on joining the Forces are informed on these matters by medical officers; and every public journal, from the *Times* to the popular tabloid, displays State-sponsored advertisements on the perils of venereal disease. Moreover by its control of broadcasting as well as of education, the State can impart its own ideology to the public, and disseminate its propaganda for seventeen hours out of the twenty-four. Indeed the modern State is the citizen's providence, parent, schoolmaster, preacher, and entertainer, demanding loyalty and obedience in return for manifold benefits bestowed. It looks after public and private morals, and provides all material necessities from the midwife to the undertaker.

Thus the Church, if its only functions are those popularly recognized and listed above, is being put out of business by the State, whose material resources are far greater, and which also posseses the advantage of being able to apply compulsion. Such being the case, the Church has the choice before it of performing some function which the State cannot or does not wish to undertake, or of becoming a subsidiary department of State activity, attached, possibly, to the Ministry of Information or the Board of Education. The State might be disposed to offer very attractive terms to a church willing to co-operate in this way. It might not only be established but adequately endowed. This notion of a church as a State department is by no means fanciful, and we are already familiar with some of the methods which might be adopted, such as propaganda in the form of prayers, homilies, special Sundays for this and that, and so on. It is in fact a very interesting and significant phenomenon that the public to-day will actually attend church in considerable numbers when bidden to do so by the Government, though ceaseless exhortation to do so by their clergy would be entirely without effect.

But assuming that the Church were to reject this rôle, and should choose rather to perform independently some function

which the State cannot or will not undertake, can such a function be found? It should not be hard to discover, for it has already been observed that the citizen of the modern State has two very pressing spiritual needs, namely (1) to be enabled to possess his soul as an individual and not to exist as a mere unit or cog in a machine, and (2) to be enabled to attain real fellowship or 'community' with other men — a relationship quite other than that which subsists between the various parts of a mechanism. May not the Church find its true function here — to give men back their souls and to give them fellowship with one another? Such general notions do indeed require to be reduced to concrete form, and the inquirer is entitled to ask how the Church will set about its task.

Probably the dual function is in actual fact one, since it is through fellowship that a man gains his true individuality. Fellowship seems to be most effectively attained by people who are sharing in the performance of a difficult or dangerous task which they consider important. The primitive Christian communities were well placed for the development of genuine fellowship, since they were small minority groups in a hostile environment, and if members had not stood together they would have been quickly liquidated; for the State was hostile. It is worth noting that the Christian Churches were only one instance of the type of group religion which grew up because the State was too large, unwieldy, inhuman and oppressive to provide any sort of fellowship. Moreover, large sections of the population felt no particular interest in the State. For the slave the State meant nothing; for the bourgeois it was just an organization for bringing him to financial ruin. Neither the Christian Church nor the mystery cults *aimed at* fellowship; it was, like happiness, a by-product, but not less important on that account.

It is doubtless because they are alive to the thinness and poverty of the fellowship which at present prevails in the Christian bodies and between them that Church leaders have begun to explore the possibilities of political, social and economic policies and 'platforms.' These socialistically-minded bishops and clergy are not primarily concerned with securing themselves against a possible day of wrath when we get a Left-wing Government. They are aware that people over whom hangs the perpetual menace of unemployment and subsistence-level existence have little aptitude for religion, so that it is in the interest of religion to provide the external conditions in which it can be understood and exercised. Those who affirm that poverty is favourable soil for the plant of religion to grow overlook the fact that the poverty-stricken in a modern industrial community believe that the adverse conditions under which they suffer are either man-made or the result of in-

evitable economic conditions. If they believe the first, they suffer from a sense of grievance and injustice; if the latter, they suffer from despair. Neither hatred nor despair make good soil for religion — at least not for the Christian religion. Poverty in a primitive agricultural community may well have different psychological results less unfavourable to piety.

But the other motive behind this religious campaign for a 'fair deal' in the politico-economic sphere should not be overlooked — that it is calculated to provide those church members who devote themselves to it with the kind of task and aim needed to promote fellowship. The aim may be political or economic, but the psychological results of embracing the aim are on a different level. An attempt to make the Church 'a new force in a new world' is likely to generate spiritual vigour and fellowship much more genuine than the type now developed by the pursuit of institutional activities with which churches at present busy themselves. It is noteworthy that that energetic prelate Samuel Wilberforce felt the need of some worthy purpose to pull church-people together — other than the mere protection of vested interests material and non-material. He found this in the mission field, and the amount of interest he personally stimulated by preaching tours and so on was phenomenal.

It will be said that a church preoccupied with politico-economic issues will be in danger of promulgating a religion not less secular in essence than the new rival religions of Fascism and Communism. A church thus preoccupied, however, would be in no greater danger of secularization than a church primarily concerned with its own endowments, or which the champion of some privileged class, or the obedient mouthpiece of State propaganda. And as a matter of fact the mere fact of a religion being concerned with secular issues does not brand it as wholly secular, so long as its secular policy is based on beliefs of a spiritual character—beliefs which our new secular cults unanimously reject. The Hebrew prophets, with their concern for social justice, are not to be described as secularists, since all their teaching was based on a belief in the righteousness of God. And if spiritual ideals do not find some measure of embodiment in the secular sphere, they would seem to have little utility, or reality, for mankind.

And there is another point. The church which limits itself to the provision of private satisfactions is not fulfilling its proper function, which is, amongst other things, to hold society together. Not a few people are to-day asking the same question as Cassius:

> 'Upon what meat doth this our Caesar feed
> That he is grown so great?'

Undoubtedly Mr. Herbert Read supplies the answer when he writes:

> 'The State only acquires its supreme authority when religion begins to decline, and the great struggle between Church and State, when, as in modern Europe, it ends so decisively in favour of the State, is from the point of view of the organic life of a society, eventually fatal.' [1]

The totalitarian State is a product of the decline of religion, for where the natural authority of religion declines, the artificial authority of the State, *i.e.* force, must take its place. The Terror is the logical result of the complete secularization of life through the decay of religion, the 'cement of society.' Theodore Drucker, in his remarkable book *The End of Economic Man*, laments the decline of these religious forces:

> 'The impotency and inadequacy of the forces of religion just at the time when they are most urgently needed is perhaps the most disheartening feature of the European situation to-day.'

It is of course due to that 'impotency and inadequacy' that 'the European situation' is what it is. And no church will get over its 'impotency and inadequacy' by following the advice of Tennyson's Northern Farmer and 'slinking along hedge-bottoms' for fear of giving offence to the powers that be. To quote Drucker again:

> 'A church that is only a tiny, persecuted minority in a vast sea of atheists might still be strong and successful if it gave its adherents a real community. It would emerge triumphant as soon as materialism had revealed itself as hollow. . . . But a Christian church which, though strong in number and quality of believers, cannot give them more than private religion and private satisfaction, ceases to be a church altogether —at least in the sense in which Europe understands the word.'

We have to face the fact that recent events in Europe have rendered out of date those idealistic views of the State which Oxford philosophers derived from Hegel. We realise that the Hegelian doctrines as embodied in the Communist or Fascist State have little of the divine about them. Hence the whole theory of the relationship of Church and State requires thinking out afresh; and this applies to the State as it exists in 'democratic' countries too, for here the State is claiming more and more power over the individual, and is unlikely to cease doing so.

But to pass on to the second need of modern man which the Churches should attempt to supply, the need to preserve his soul and his individuality against the forces of propaganda, industry, finance, militarism, political tyranny, and so forth, which seek to seduce and suppress the human soul. As has been said, the provision of genuine fellowship, which means something and can effect

[1] *The Philosophy of Anarchism*, p. 24.

something, and make a difference in a man's life and outlook, can be of great use here. Nor are material conditions irrelevant, for the healthy and normal development of many an unfortunate individual has been warped or starved as a result of bad environment. But a church as an exponent of a specific activity, the religious, cannot evade the task of teaching the individual how to make the best use of what spiritual powers and perceptions he has, and how to develop them. Training in the actual practice of religion could and should be systematic and scientific, with methods and principles based on the experience of centuries and of all the great world religions. For Westerners, following so distinguished a seeker as the late Sir Francis Younghusband, need not hesitate to look to the East for guidance. Nor is this mere pietism, the deliberate cultivation of religious emotions, or the attempt to become 'a superior person.' Education of the intellect, and the general cultivation of the mind, do help to fortify an individual, rendering him impervious to the grosser kind of propaganda. But intellect and reason are not all, as our modern tyrants and charlatans know only too well. There are deeper levels, and it is these the charlatan aims to capture, and too often succeeds in capturing. But if these levels are rendered healthy and tough by the systematic practice of religion inspired by rational and moral ideals, they will resist those subtle poisoning influences which now seem so powerful. Religion can toughen a man's core so that it becomes impervious to the poisons of propaganda.

But it should be remembered that apart from some rational philosophy of spirit, such as the ordinary man can understand and believe, the individual cannot be reinstated, nor 'community' restored, inasmuch as the suppression of the individual, and the destruction of 'community' are products of materialism. Whether our religious tradition retains sufficient vitality to supply this need remains to be seen. It is the one thing needful.

THE NATIONAL CHURCH AS A TEACHER OF CHRISTIAN TRUTH

By the Very Rev. W. R. Inge, D.D., F.B.A., K.C.V.O.

'THE National Church as a Teacher of Christian Truth.' That is the subject chosen for me. A more difficult task has never been imposed upon me. In the first place, what is the Church? When a layman talks of going into the Church, he identifies the Church with the clergy. That clearly will not do. Does the National Church include all who write C. of E. in filling up official forms? Or only those who go to church on Sunday? Or the communicant roll? It is true that we have a National Society, and a *National Review*, and other associations which use the adjective, but a National Church seems to make a claim which it would be hard to justify. Who are excluded by the word Church? A Roman Catholic would say all who do not belong to the Roman Church, outside of which there is no salvation. An Anglo-Catholic would say that the Church means the Church of England, and other denominations which have the privilege of being governed by bishops. Rejecting these limitations, shall I take refuge in the surprisingly liberal definition in the Bidding Prayer, according to which the Holy Catholic Church is the whole congregation of Christian people dispersed through the world? So I suppose the National Church is the congregation of Christian people dispersed through Great Britain, or perhaps through the British Empire. Secondly, how is the Church to teach anything? Has any individual, or any group, the right to speak for the Church of England? We have no Pope, no inquisition, no *Index Expurgatorius*, no Gestapo, no concentration camps. Thirdly, what is Christian Truth? Who will enlighten us? The Bishops? The Church Assembly? It is quite certain that the Anglican Church, which represents central English Christianity in all its discrepant forms, can never agree to teach anything, right or wrong. We may sing, 'We are not divided, all one body we'; but poetry is not closely tied to facts.

But, it might be said, we have our authorities. Well, there is the Bible, the book in which everyone seeks and finds his own opinions. There are the decisions of the undivided Church in the ecumenical councils. These can never be modified, because the Church is not undivided. It is as if no legislation were valid until it had been passed at a joint session of the British Parliament and the American Congress. There are the Thirty-Nine Articles. Most

of the Bishops would say, There is the Nicene Creed, and the Apostles' Creed, adding *sotto voce*, We shall not ask you exactly what meaning you attach to the Descent into Hell, the Ascension into Heaven, and the Resurrection of the Flesh. My hearers to-day will not wish Christian Truth to be determined by any of these oracles.

Well then, for the purposes of this paper, which after all I have consented to write, what do I mean by Christian Truth? As for what the National Church means, and how a Church which consists of free men and women, and of Englishmen with individualism and wilfulness in their blood, can agree to teach anything, I give it up. But I have a clear idea in my mind of what Christian Truth means, and I hope most of you will agree with me, at least in the main points. I also know where I look for my authorities, for we are not making a religion for ourselves. My authorities are the books of the New Testament, studied critically; for religion is like those chemical substances which are never found pure. But I honestly think that the less we talk about the denominational Church the better. I ventured to say, or to put the epigram into the mouth of one of the speakers in my little book of dialogues, that

> 'Churches are secular institutions, in which the half-educated cater for the half-converted.'

I do not see how this can be avoided, since, if we believe our Founder, only a few in each generation find the narrow gate which leadeth unto life, while Churches try to rope in as many as they can get. A popular Church is always a corrupt Church, as Cardinal Newman, the *enfant terrible* of Catholicism, had the courage to say. Christian Truth is not a thing to be vulgarized, to tickle the ears of the groundlings; it is not the residuum, if there is one, which the learned professor and his kitchen-maid could agree to accept.

Ours is a historical religion, which appeared at a certain date and place — in Palestine in the first century of our era. It began as a purely religious movement, a prophetic revelation of unparalleled intensity and elevation. The Galileans were a people of mixed origin, a well educated, upstanding peasantry, whose prosperity is mentioned by Josephus. They were loyal Jews, and rather turbulent nationalists, but their religion had its centre in the synagogue, not in the temple. The Jerusalem hierarchy did not touch them closely. Some of them cherished the hope of a supernatural deliverance from the Romans, 'the days of the Messiah,' according to the apocalyptic writings which were popular. Our Lord probably came into conflict with the 'patriots' more than our Gospels show. Before the end of the first century the patriotic

party of Galilee no longer existed, but the controversy with the Scribes about the Law was very much alive. In the reign of Tiberius some of the pious Galileans found a leader in Jesus of Nazareth, whose personality and teaching made so overwhelming an impression upon his disciples that even his execution could not shake their faith. I wish specially to emphasize this, as against those modern critics who hold that Christ is merely a deified cult-hero, a peg on which the infant community hung their own best thoughts, in his lifetime a wandering prophet whose message was the approaching end of the age, but of whose actual career we can know hardly anything for certain. I maintain that all this is psychologically impossible. For one thing, the recorded sayings of Christ show, if we may venture to say so, a gracious and profound wisdom far above the heads of his reporters. Except in the Fourth Gospel they contain curiously little which reflects the controversies of the end of the first century. Above all, these theories entirely fail to account for the conduct of the apostles. Traditionalists and rationalists agree in assuming that the faith of the disciples was determined by miraculous events. But we, I hope, have not forgotten the line of *Faust* that 'miracle is the dearest child of faith.' The child, not the parent. In my opinion beliefs which have no demonstrable factual basis are rationalizations of some very deep and half-understood spiritual conviction, and without this could never be held heartily enough to alter a man's whole life. What we have to consider is not the evidence for the miracles, but the validity of the faith which at that time and place rationalized itself as attested by miracles. When we remember the supposed frequency of visions, and the readiness of the people to believe that John Baptist or one of the old prophets was risen from the dead, we cannot suppose that the post-resurrection appearances would have obliterated the horror of the crucifixion. I am convinced that never man spake like Jesus, or inspired such unbounded confidence, love, and veneration. As for eschatology, I do not think that either Mark or Q identified the Kingdom of God (is the phrase ever found earlier than the Gospels?) with the 'days of the Messiah,' a this-worldly and terminable era preceding the last judgment and general resurrection. In the Gospels it means either the sovereignty of God as a reality already proclaimed, or what we call 'heaven.' I do not believe that our Lord identified himself with the apocalyptic Messiah, or that he proclaimed himself as, so to speak, his own forerunner. It is significant that in Mark the Messiahship is a secret.

What should be our attitude as Liberal Churchmen towards popular supernaturalism? I do not think we ought to discourage simple faith from speaking in its own language. All forms of

faith are symbolic; we can see spiritual things only in a mirror, by way of symbols. Can even philosophy dispense with myth? Plato thought not. But to say that our faith is proved by signs and wonders — that it stands or falls, shall we say, by the evidence for the empty tomb — that, I am sure, is not what our Master would have us tell our people. Did he not protest against it himself?

Messianism had no meaning for Gentile converts. It was not repudiated; religion, the most potent of antiseptics, seldom repudiates anything. But it was dead even in the later epistles of St. Paul. It is still more otiose in the Fourth Gospel, where its place is taken by the Logos-doctrine, and the closely-related doctrine of the Holy Spirit, almost identical with the glorified and ever-present Christ. This we find already in St. Paul. 'The Lord is the Spirit.' St. Paul is not a systematic theologian. He grazes several heresies. But he understands his Master very well; those who either disparage him or make him the real founder of Christianity are quite mistaken. It is true that in passing from Semitic to Hellenistic soil the religion of Christ encountered and surmounted a great crisis; but it could not have survived as a Hebraic religion, which is only another way of saying that the Gospel itself was not a purely Semitic creed. We may remember the parallel case of the rejection of Buddhism in India. When our Lord promised to be with his disciples all the days, even to the end of the world, he sanctioned the Christ-mysticism which was the core of St. Paul's religion, and has been the core of Christian piety ever since.

I can therefore say that between the covers of the New Testament, read critically, I find all that I mean by Christian truth. I do not think we shall gain much by following Church history any further. The Church was at its purest during the persecutions. After the concordat with Constantine it was soon corrupted; and the necessity of suppressing all fissiparous tendencies ended in strangling free thought, and in bribing and terrorizing the still half-pagan majority by gaudy and lurid pictures of bliss and torment. The mystics had the root of the matter in them; but exclusive mysticism leads logically to the blurring of personality, human and divine, to contempt for the world in which we live, and to loss of human love and affection, for we cannot love ourselves, and we can hardly love a God who is no longer distinguishable from our transfigured selves.

The only true apostolical succession is in the lives of real Christians, and we shall find much more help in their writings than in the official doctrines of the Churches. We do not, I think, owe much either to Luther or to Calvin. Luther's doctrine of justification by faith — *fides* practically equal to *fiducia* — means noth-

ing to me. His doctrine that the State can do no wrong is horrible, and its consequences in history have been disastrous. Calvinism is a fine manly creed, very much like Stoicism. But it is difficult to worship a God who, by our ideas, is neither just nor merciful. We all remember the angry protest of John Stuart Mill against the popular teaching of his day. Of our own classical divines I prefer William Law, but we ought to know Hooker, Jeremy Taylor, and Butler. I will not name more modern writers, but it is easy to see how impossible it would be to take any of them as speaking in the name of the Church. Many of our best religious teachers have been laymen.

My authority then is the New Testament, studied critically. I do not think it is so very difficult to remove from the Gospels passages which must be secondary. Of course our Lord did not say, 'Tell it unto the Church,' when as yet there was no Church. I doubt very much whether 'the little apocalypse' is genuine. He certainly did not call his fellow-countrymen 'the Jews,' or tell them that their father was the Devil. But as regards the discourses and parables as a whole I am rather conservative. It is significant that St. Paul, writing before our Gospels were compiled, is careful to distinguish his own judgments from those which come from 'the Lord.' No doubt the disciples omitted to record much that we should dearly like to know. It maybe that they misinterpreted some things which their Master said. But we have to remember that it takes two to tell the truth, one to speak and one to hear. What is historically certain is that there was a divine revelation of unparalleled depth, elevation, and intensity in Palestine in the reign of Tiberius. It had its centre in Jesus, but the Holy Spirit was also in his hearers, and continued to bear witness to him after he left the earth. It is this revelation, as transmitted in the canonical books, which we mean by the Gospel. It is not of extreme importance that all the sayings in the evangelists were actually spoken by Christ, though I have said that I belong to the right wing of criticism here.

But, we may be reminded, this revelation was given at a certain time and place. It could not anticipate problems which have arisen since its date. Science, art, domestic and foreign politics, war, economics — how large a place they fill in our lives, and how small a place in the New Testament! Our Lord seems to have been magnificently detached from all worldly interests, from which we cannot detach ourselves. Can our religion give us no help in our duties as citizens? If we are called to scientific research, scholarship, the fine arts, or even to politics, will our Lord bless us in our work, or tell us only to seek the Kingdom of God and his righteousness?

We must distinguish. He lived among peasants, who knew nothing of intellectual pursuits. What could he have taught them about natural science, scholarship, painting and sculpture, or philosophy? These things were altogether outside their range. We can only say that in his words 'consider the lilies,' in his interest in outdoor life in Palestine, and in his habit of resorting to mountain tops for silent prayer, he showed that nature-mystics like Wordsworth are not far from the Kingdom of God. But his aloofness from secular politics is a different matter, for there was no lack of interest in nationalism among the Galileans, and Hebrew prophecy was never silent about social evils. As I understand it, our Lord's attitude was this. Rebellion against Rome he would not touch. On the social question, he held that the great error was to overvalue the importance of the paraphernalia of life. The rich man is called, not 'thou thief,' but 'thou fool'; he had got his values all wrong. An American millionaire once said, 'I don't get much fun out of my money. I have to work eight hours a day to keep off those who want to rob me.' A very foolish way of spending our lives, our Lord thought. The most favourable condition of life, he seems to have thought, was that in which he had been brought up, a life of steady work and very simple comfort. There were no proletarians in Galilee, and no big business. A man who was content to be a small farmer, a carpenter, or a fisherman, could live without much anxiety, and therefore happily. On the other hand, a man who lives for avarice or self-indulgence is blind to all the higher values of life; he is in fact a fool. 'A man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.' This strikes at all materialism, whether the materialist is the owner of wealth or one of those who wish to take it from him. There are no detailed instructions as to how a man ought to vote in a twentieth century community. It is absurd to expect anything of the kind. But there is a Christian standard of values, and by that standard the things which cause political jealousies and conflicts do not count for much. Christianity is an other-worldly religion; but it is other-worldliness alone which can transform this world. I believe that an acceptance of the Christian standard of values, which can be learned plainly from the New Testament, would solve most of our social problems.

But I must try to tell you what aspects of Christian Truth in my opinion most need emphasizing just now. This is not, I am afraid, quite what I was asked to do, but it is all that I can do. We have each of us to think what is the best material that we can bring to the temple of God. The wise Master-builder must fit in the stones in their proper places. As for what I am about to say, you may not all agree with it, but I think we shall only differ in

emphasis. What are the essentials of our faith, and in what ways is the spirit of the age hostile to the mind of Christ?

First I should put the simple and familiar words, God is Love. When Christianity was fresh from the mint it used several new or almost new words to express new ideas. Of these the chief were Love (ἀγάπη); Humility, raised from a fault to a virtue; Joy, never before made a moral duty; Peace, 'blessed are the peacemakers'; Faith, in quite a new sense—πίστις in Plato has no very exalted rank; and Hope, no longer a will of the wisp to reconcile man with his lot, but an anchor of the soul, sure and steadfast. Of these, Love has the first place. God is Spirit, God is Light, and God is Love. Love is the hierophant of the divine mysteries; it admits us into the heart of life as nothing else does. It gives us knowledge of God in a quite peculiar sense. The other attributes of God, Power, Holiness, Wisdom, are perfections which we cannot share. But our love of God, and of our neighbour in God, is identical in nature with God's love of us. This is brought out very well in a sermon by St. Bernard:

> 'Let one who is struck with dread, with fear, with astonishment, rest satisfied with honouring; but all these feelings are absent in one who loves. Love is a great reality. It is the only one of all the movements, affections and feelings of the soul in which the creature is able to respond to its Creator, though not upon equal terms, and to repay like with like. Rightly does the soul renounce all other affections, and devote herself to him who alone is Love, because she can make a return to him by a love which is reciprocal. Although being a creature she loves less, because she is less, if she loves with her whole self nothing is wanting where all is given.'

In the philosophy of religion this has great importance. In all the religions of escape—Stoicism, Indian philosophy, and in many of the mystics—the promise is to make us invulnerable, and this means that we must substitute benevolence for love, for love often hurts very much. In Indian thought human personality is lost in the great ocean of the Godhead: but for Christianity the 'I' and 'Thou' relation between man and God is never lost, and therefore even in the mystical union there is still love. I have often referred to the admirable words of Clement of Alexandria. The first saving change is from unbelief to faith. Faith is a compendious knowledge of essentials, a resolution to stand or fall by the noblest hypothesis. It is an experiment which ends in an experience; Faith, in Clement's words, becomes Knowledge. Knowledge in turn becomes Love, which unites the knower and the known. The first and third stages, says Clement (and Proclus says the same), are simple; the second is complex. A little philosophy, says Bacon, may estrange us from religion, but depth in philosophy brings us back to it; only not, we may add, to the same beliefs

from which our earlier thinking separated us. There is another aspect of the truth that God is Love. He so loved the world that He gave his only Son. Without falling into the heresy of patripassianism, we may say that to suffer for those we love is a divine thing. St. Augustine could not find this in the Platonists; it is not there. It is because God is Love that an incarnation is credible.

It is difficult, in this most miserable time, to say much about Christian joy, what Dr. Jacks calls 'the lost radiance of the Christian religion.' But we cannot be blind to the jubilant and defiant confidence of St. Paul, at a time when there was little enough to encourage him in his life's work. This temper faded slowly. Hermas says that unhappiness is quite alien to the Christian temper. St. Augustine before his conversion had noted 'the holy dignity of self-control, serene and quietly merry,' which distinguished his Christian friends. Medieval casuists classed *acedia*, a compound of sloth and depression, the besetting temptation, it would seem, of the cloister, as one of the seven deadly sins. St. Francis of Assisi revived the light-heartedness of the early Christians. Spinoza, outside Christianity, condemns *tristitia* as a grave fault. We are told that the Roman Church will not canonize anyone whose religion does not seem to have made him or her happy. Well, joy is a fine flower of the Christian character, which we must cultivate as far as we can. It is a fruit of the Spirit; we must pray to be delivered from the sorrow of the world which worketh death, and alas, only the indwelling Spirit of Christ can deliver us from it just now.

We are still encumbered by the relics of nineteenth century optimism, a mere superstition which has nothing to do with Christian joy. Belief in inevitable progress is no part of Christian faith, but it was so much entangled with it that many have thought that since it is impossible any longer to believe in it we must abandon our belief in Christianity too. One effect of this superstition, which Catholics have called, not unfairly, the last great Western heresy, has been to cast away not only the belief in eternal punishment, which was almost always stated in a barbarous and really blasphemous form, but our belief in evil as a positive and powerful influence in the world. It has been considered a mark of liberal thought to disbelieve in the Devil, not only in the grotesque and serio-comic figure of a monster with horns and a tail, but in what St. Paul calls spiritual wickedness in heavenly places. Some philosophies are incompatible with belief in evil as a positive power contending against God. All partial evil, Alexander Pope suggests, is universal good; according to some of our modern idealists it only needs to be readjusted and completed in the Absolute. Now here we must get our thoughts clear. In the world

of facts, abstracted from values, there are perhaps no degrees of reality. If in such a world we like to suppose that evil is only negative, we may, since in a world without values there is neither good nor evil. But if reality is a kingdom of values, it is essentially hierarchical, and there are disvalues, negative signs, as well as positive. Especially if we give our attention to moral values, evil is not merely negative. The moralist, as moralist, is necessarily half Manichean. Metaphysics are monistic, ethics dualistic, aesthetics pluralistic. We must try to do justice to all three, difficult as it is. Whether we like it or not, this is the religion of the New Testament, and the teaching of Christ and St. Paul: 'The prince of this world cometh and hath nothing in me': 'The whole world lieth in the wicked one'; 'We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the world-rulers of this darkness, against spiritual wickedness in heavenly places.' We cannot deny the existence of spiritual evil without contradicting the teaching of the Gospels. This may be unwelcome to some of us, but no reader of the New Testament can deny that this belief is there. Perhaps it is easier for us to believe this than for our fortunate parents and grandparents in the nineteenth century. Evolution does not abolish evil.

Another error against which we are bound to be on our guard is what I may call democratism. It is a common reproach among us that our churches are half empty, and that the nations of Europe are not really Christian. Do we never read the Gospels?

> 'Enter ye in by the narrow gate, because strait is the gate and narrow is the way that leadeth unto life, and few there are that find it. For wide is the gate and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be that go in thereat.'

I have quoted Cardinal Newman. 'We want better Christians, not more Christians,' Bishop Gore said. 'Woe unto you when all men shall speak well of you, for so did their fathers unto the false prophets.' 'If they have kept my saying they will keep yours also.' There is not the slightest hope held out in the Gospels that the mass of men and women will ever be Christian. I know some of you think that I am too severe on the clerical demagogue who responds so eagerly to those who say, like Jacob, 'if the Lord will keep me in the way that I go, and will give me food to eat and raiment to put on, then shall the Lord be my God.' I do not think it possible to warn Churchmen too strongly against this insidious temptation. Political religion is the worst apostasy. I sometimes remember the scene in the Iliad where Aphrodite orders Helen to go to bed with her unworthy lover Paris. Helen's better nature revolts, though ineffectually. 'Go thou and sit by his side,' she exclaims to the goddess, 'and let thy footsteps never bear thee back

to Olympus. But ever sympathise with him and take care of him, till he make thee his wife, or rather his slave.' To be the slave of a political faction, and that at the time when it is grasping the reins of power—power which it is certain to abuse, as power always is abused — that would indeed be the deepest disgrace into which a Church could fall. 'If the salt have lost its savour, it is thenceforth good for nothing but to be cast out and trodden under foot of man.'

Another rampant evil, into which we of this Society are less liable to fall, is sectarianism. It is of course not called that, but 'good churchmanship.' In secular politics it is called totalitarianism. This kind of intolerance, this appeal to partisanship and loyalty, has dogged the footsteps of our religion from the first. It has been, we cannot deny it, a source of strength, of outward success — so has Hitlerism, which has copied its methods. A shrewd continental observer said, 'There are three invincibles: the German Army, the Roman Catholic Church, and the Standard Oil Company.' But it has been the direct cause of such a series of horrible crimes that we can almost sympathize with Swinburne's saying, 'I could worship the Crucified if he came to me without his leprous bride the Church.' Christianity is individual and universal. It begins by cleansing the inside of the cup, and works outwards upon society, like a leaven, as our Lord said. Intolerance, I suppose, is part of the Jewish heritage; but it was almost imposed upon the Church by the numerous 'heretical' movements of the early centuries which, in spite of its efforts, ended at last in disruption. I need not spend more time here in denouncing this evil, but it is one of the main enemies of the religion of Christ. The Roman Church will survive the German Army and Standard Oil, but if Christ had come to earth during the ages of faith, he would assuredly have been burnt alive.

I do not think I will enter into the terribly difficult question about our attitude to war. I am sure that war is radically unchristian, and equally sure that it is a monstrous anachronism, which sooner or later will go the way of cannibalism, human sacrifice, the torture of witnesses, and the burning of heretics and witches. But I will not argue with those who think that 'in a state of sin' some violations of the law of Christ are for a time unavoidable. Only our rule must be, 'Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.'

But in conclusion I want to say this. Besides the law of love, God has implanted in us a knowledge, absolute so far as it goes, though imperfect, of certain ultimate values which are attributes of his own nature and character. These are traditionally Goodness, Truth, and Beauty. We do not always know what our

duty is, nor what truth is, nor what things are beautiful; but we do know that in so far as our conscience tells us that we must do what is right, believe what is true, and admire what is beautiful, there must be no hesitation on our part. These three ultimate values stand in their own right. They cannot be justified by anything outside themselves — for instance, by utilitarian considerations. Nor can they even be made means towards each other, though they are a threefold cord not quickly broken. We do ourselves wrong if we doubt the absolute validity of these intuitions. Nineteenth century materialism disparaged this source of knowledge, and tried to separate fact from value. It was a mistake; I am even convinced that there is no perception (as distinguished from sensation) without valuation. And while many values are instrumental, these three are ultimate. I believe that this view is philosophically impregnable, and it enables us to amplify the teaching of the New Testament by paying due respect to science and art, which lay outside the purview of the Palestinian Church, and indeed of early Christianity as a whole. Christian art had its birth later; science could not come into its own till much later. But the belief that God reveals himself in these three ways is, in my opinion, both certain and necessary. We need a reconciliation between humanism, science, and religion. These former enemies are holding out their hands to each other.

These then are the truths which I think we should try to emphasize as Christians and as Churchmen. As a National Church, however we may define it, I think we should be well content to follow the bent of our traditions as Englishmen, or as Britons if you prefer the word. I believe we have something distinctive and characteristic to give to the world, something which does not come from Hebraism or Hellenism or Romanism or German Protestantism. Professor Garrod calls it Gothic; I prefer to call it English. If we can make the Church of England representative of the best that our nation has to give, it will be doing its work; and we must welcome contributions not only from lay Churchmen, but from high-minded men and women who do not belong to our Anglican communion. Those who are not against us are on our side. There is no fear that Christian truth thus understood will ever perish. Christ, through his Holy Spirit, is with us even to the end of the world. 'In all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.' But our victory leads us through Calvary.

THE NATIONAL CHURCH AND DIVINE WORSHIP

By Canon R. D. Richardson, Harborne Vicarage, Birmingham.

THE most powerful influence in any religion is its public worship; so that every device is attempted, and every resistance offered, to avoid the manner of it being changed. Yet if the religion has vitality, its nature is such as to be adaptable indefinitely without ceasing to be itself; and forces are always at work to bring its traditional forms into a more reasoned system. In the end the necessary changes are made.

When the Church in England became the Church of England, three forces were at work. For over a hundred years they had been gathering strength. Then they reached their climax and fulfilment. There was in the sixteenth century a national revolution, England advancing among the nations. There was a social revolution, due to the rise of mercantile towns, to the distribution of monastic property among the laity, and to problems of unemployment caused by the enclosure of common lands and the conversion of tillage into pasture. There was also an intellectual revolution, a quickening of the spirit of free critical inquiry. These three forces, in themselves, were of a secularizing nature; but received into the Christian tradition, they widened its influence, deepened its ethical basis and placed it on a more solid foundation in truth. Changes resulted not only in the Church's jurisdiction and government, but also in its forms of worship. The secularizing forces for a time were stayed; yet presently revived, and are in full tide once more to-day. The vitality of Christianity likewise mounts to match them, so that our ultimate concern in this paper is how the three forces can be religiously interpreted and reflected in our worship once again. But first let us consider what happened at the Reformation. We must know what we have in the Prayer Book, if we are to change it in the right direction.

II.

The success of the national revolution in the sixteenth century was linked with the thought of God. From the time when, first of all the nations, England stepped out, unharmed, from the fold of mediaeval Christendom, to the day when her improvised navy destroyed the great Armada, the thought that God was with her was growing into a firm conviction. The conviction was not confined to leaders; the people as a whole believed that the will of God was shown in their experience; and this is even reflected in

the ephemeral literature of the day, *e.g.* private letters. The result upon worship was the moulding of its forms into closer contact with the national life. After a period in King Edward VI's reign during which every parish church was liable to become the scene of religious experiment, a series of new Prayer Books was issued by authority and passed through Parliament as part of Acts of Uniformity. The nation became one Church, a theocracy, whose supreme governor on earth found his prototype in the 'godly kings' of the Old Testament, and in which the great officers of state were likewise to be prayed for as God's 'ministers.' The sense of national predestination was expressed in such phrases as 'Make thy *chosen* people joyful' and 'He is the Lord our God: we are the people of his pasture and the sheep of his hand.' A people who had undergone an experience similar to that of the chosen race of old naturally helped itself eagerly to those Jewish elements of worship which reflected it. Note too the marked ethical bias of both Jewish and English services, due, in each case, partly to natural temperament and partly to the sense of God's election. Public worship expressed gratitude; but upon the dedication to God's law, which it also expressed, the continued welfare of the people was believed to depend. The Prayer Book is, in fact, a symbol of the Covenant into which the Commonwealth had entered with Almighty God. Hence, too, the inclusion within it of the so-called 'State Services,' which commemorated outstanding political events: the Powder Plot, the Martyrdom of King Charles, the Restoration of the Monarchy, the Accession of the Sovereign. Only the last of these remains; the others remained until 1859.

In what way did the social revolution affect our forms of public worship? In impressing upon them, it may be answered, the outlook of the Tudor governing class. 'To order myself lowly and reverently to all my betters' is often quoted. But no contemptible humility is here inculcated; rather the truth of hierarchy in society; also the virtue of self-respect. The next words of the Catechism are incapable of distortion: 'To learn and labour truly to get mine own living, and to do my duty in that state of life unto which it shall please (not 'it *has* pleased') God to call me.' A sense of the dignity and responsibility of each individual is being taught; and his elevation to a higher walk in life is contemplated. Consider, too, how high and noble a view of man is reflected in the Communion Office, where self-oblation is conceived to be the only fitting sacrifice of Christians. What sincerity is thereby asked of each! In the doctrine of the priesthood of the laity, which rejects the idea of priest as mediator, is involved the view that all are spiritual and that there is no privilege of access to God. Also,

prayer is made, not only for the King and for his ministers, but for 'all sorts and conditions of men.' And a conviction that the unlettered also are God's children demanded that the Prayer Book be used in the vernacular; whence it became a means of education and enlightenment. With these influences in regular operation, the society which the worshippers compose must inevitably move on lines of righteousness and mutual service. If, at the time, specifically social benefits accrued chiefly to a governing class — itself new — which was replacing the feudal nobles, and to a clergy which gained standing by advantages of learning, nevertheless there was the beginning of a movement towards the emancipation of all, towards the creation of a democracy which, nourished in ideals of human worth and dignity, would know how to use its freedom.

The intellectual revolution of the sixteenth century was occasioned originally by the discovery of the ancient world and, through this, of the beauty, joy and tragedy of human life : human life, that is, as such; on earth; in all times and places. Think what the reading of Homer in the original must then have meant! Likewise the classics fostered a new spirit of inquiry and discrimination, and an unwillingness to take anything second-hand, or under the cloak of infallibility. This spirit we find reflected in the Thirty-nine Articles, *e.g.* in their subordination of creeds and doctrines to the Bible and in their assertion that ecclesiastical decrees may err; likewise in the Ordinal, in the encouragement there given to free study; while in the Services of the Church it is reflected in the exaltation of life and religion above transcendentalism and dogma. The language of the Prayer Book, poetic prose, is yet the language of common life, touching everyday realities and revealing an attitude based upon the Gospels rightly understood. The Communion Service comes closer to the heart by the placing of emphasis upon the Upper Room and upon discipleship, rather than upon theology. Indeed, the general tendency of the Prayer Book is to bring the whole person, not the soul only, near to God. One might say that its outlook is incarnational, whereas that of the Greek Church is mystical and that of the Roman, sacrificial. The mystical and sacrificial types of worship are steeped in transcendentalism and shaped in dogma, these being the corresponding divine and human ends; but the incarnational outlook moves away from transcendentalism and dogma, and its worship is shaped by the thought of a divine and human life in history. And in this wider field of reality it unites those who are divided by particular dogmatic trends. Theology is important and provides the bony structures of the Prayer Book, but religion is its flesh and blood.

III.

Let us turn to the twentieth century. Belief in England's destiny within the comity of nations is gaining a new significance. The revival of nationality was one of the greatest movements of last century, and if England, of all great countries, has been of late the least exclusively national, her spirit is changing as she advances once more to leadership. Not that we are likely to think of ourselves again as a 'chosen people,' or of the worship of God as something on which national prosperity depends; but we can, and are beginning to, believe that we have a mission and responsibility to the world. And this can lead to humble reliance on God, and to co-operation with His righteous will and purposes. Worship in this spirit is creative of right values in the national character. If the Church will devote itself to strengthening the national life, a tremendous field of opportunity is open to it. What we have to strengthen, and to build upon, are some innate national qualities: justice, toleration, peaceableness; a ready response to the moral appeal; a habit of judging policies and doctrines by their fruits rather than by speculative criticism or artificial standards. Anything unreal, or out of touch with common life, stands like a wall between the Englishman and his religion. The statement that 'all men are conceived and born in sin' evokes general hostility. I have observed a great unwillingness to answer 'All this I steadfastly believe,' when any form of Creed is put interrogatively at Holy Baptism. The view that matrimony signifies and represents 'the spiritual marriage and unity betwixt Christ and His Church' is passed over as incomprehensible. The idea that Ordination confers the power to remit or retain sins is rejected. On the other hand, I have known a Roman Catholic ultimately converted to the Church of England through the impression of reality first made upon him by hearing our Funeral Office clearly and solemnly said. Forms of worship evoke response in proportion as they give prayerful expression to the fundamental and abiding characteristics of a people; and this principle must govern all reforms, religious no less than political.

In England to-day both State and Church are restless because the Church has tended to detach itself from the national life and thought. It has become acutely conscious of itself as a separate organization, over against the nation as a secular body. Its mind is turned towards such things as drawing fences round baptism and marriage in church; as the impropriety of assistant bishops being junior canons; government of the Church by ecclesiastical synods; disestablishment. Clinging to the forms of worship of four centuries ago, it has become isolated in a world which has changed many of its intellectual and social presuppositions, and it con-

ceives that immobility as a duty of loyalty. In compensation for this severance from the nation, it emphasizes its unity with foreign churches whose conception of Christianity is equally ecclesiastical and exclusive. But this attempt at a short cut towards a universal Church is abortive. It can no more succeed than can similar short cuts towards political internationalism. The idea of nationality is not opposed to the idea of internationalism: it is opposed, in both religion and politics, to the idea of uniformity and to the exclusion of valuable elements in national life. In the religious field, ultimate communion between the churches must be kept in view, and it is no ignoble principle that a church should do nothing to jeopardize its catholicity; but the ideal of catholicity should be fully Christian, and practical. It can only consist in a common acceptance of essential Christianity on its spiritual and moral sides. Such an ideal can also win the acceptance of national states, and find expression in their institutions, thereby fitting them for fellowship in a family of nations. So shall Church and world at length become co-terminous.

On the basis of this ideal, the first duty of the Church of England is to become again the voice of the whole nation as a worshipping community. And if there are influences which work against this ideal of an inclusive national Church, there are also influences which foster it. These hold the promise of the future. The B.B.C. services of morning and evening prayer are such a unifying influence. Again, the present destruction of church buildings of all denominations, and the indifference of large sections of the people to all organized religion, have awakened in certain churchmen, whose ecclesiastical principles could never have borne such fruit, a pastoral activity which is impatient of sectarianism. It is not unknown to-day even for Anglo-Catholics, as well as Modernists, to join together with Nonconformists in revised services of Holy Communion. As in the sixteenth century we have, in fact, entered upon a period in which any parish church is liable to become the scene of far-reaching experiments. By Act of Parliament, our schools are shortly to have their daily services, which testifies to the State's recognition that there are essential values of character which can only be created through public worship. All this means, in the end, not only the revision of our present services, but also the provision of additional forms of worship, to cover the wider needs and interests of the nation's life. The final result will be the permanent enrichment of worship in a national church conceived as the manifestation of the religious life of the whole nation.

If public worship has in part declined because church services have grown remote from the national character and aspirations, it

has in part declined also as a result of far-reaching changes in the social structure. The use of machinery, the consequent depopulation of the countryside and overcrowding in unplanned towns, the operation of a system in which all was left to individual enterprise, have created hardships for one section of the community. On the other hand, scientific discovery has made life easier for those who could afford the new advantages. And through the power of the vote, a political party has arisen to expose and to remedy the inequalities. Finally, easier international contacts have extended class-consciousness and sharpened the divisions within each nation. Thought is therefore now turned largely from the spiritual world to the more tangible realm of social and economic organization. The protest of the working masses against their exploitation has been framed, inevitably, on the basis of their right to a greater share of the amenities which they have helped to create; and class warfare has been stirred as a means of securing it. The equality of brotherhood has been overlooked. Again, there is so much human misery that we need no longer accept with resignation as part of a divinely-appointed order, so much that lies within our knowledge and control to remedy, that God seems irrelevant and His worship unimportant.

This preoccupation with material things, among all classes, has led also to a strengthening of the defects in our national character — love of ease and comfort, dislike of discipline and effort, indifference to culture. And commercialized pleasures have tended to fix life in a system of low values. With the power of standards of behaviour weakened; the value of ceremonies and tradition, of beauty and of manners unappreciated; and with that dread of all distinction introduced which makes men uniformly undiscriminating and deficient in delicacy of reaction, so that they handle roughly and superficially things that are deep and tender and elusive — life has begun to lose most that makes it worth the living, for persons.

How is the Church meeting this situation? Certain sections of it, acutely aware of their detachment from the nation's life in things religious, seek to make contact with the discontented through social and economic proclamations. Some would go further and revise the Church's worship in the light of this prevailing interest. I say nothing of those who distort history by presenting Jesus from the pulpit as a social democrat, or desecrate worship by using it to promote revolution; but the suggestion that the Eucharist should be revised to show that religion is social needs passing criticism. It comes chiefly from that ecclesiastical party which subordinates the individual to the Church and feels a natural attraction to ideas of political collectivism. The Eucharist, it argues, is the corporate action of the Church in

offering to God a sacrifice which prevails with Him. The emphasis, then, falls on what is social. Some have ideas of bringing out this social aspect of the Eucharist by introducing an offertory procession, in which members of the laity carry bread and wine, as well as alms, to the altar; and there are even churches where each communicant first places a bread in a vessel with a spoon. 'Here,' says an exponent of such schemes, 'is the whole spirit of "production" . . .'

But social religion, in the strict sense of the word, only exists in primitive communities. The essence of Christian worship, even when practised in community, lies in the relation of the individual soul to God. Personal or spiritual life itself is primarily a matter of depth and intensity, not of gregariousness. The personal is more than the social, and Christianity is more than community. The right way, therefore, of directing the social revolution into Christian channels is by nourishing personal life. And the most intensely personal of all activities is worship. The soul is never so alive as when all its faculties are directed in praise and adoration to Him Who is its Origin, its Sustainer and its End; nor is it ever so free as when it looks straight to the God of Jesus, and receives its commands direct from Him; nor so whole as when it has been healed by the Love that knows how to come down to our lowest need. There is, too, a moment in pure worship when the personality is enlarged, and becomes at one with its fellows: 'As thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be in us.' This extension of the self reaches its height in public worship; perhaps when a great congregation, directed by fine musicianship, sings a hymn so full of pure religion as 'Jesu, lover of my soul'; or again, when we gather as disciples round the Table of the Lord. 'The whole multitude that believed were of one heart and soul.' Revision of the Communion Office should therefore be in the direction of making it more consistent with its central theme; that of personal consecration to God through the Christ Who, under the forms of bread and wine, communicates to us His own Self. Through communion with Him, we ourselves become full persons, with breadth of interest and fullness of energy devoted to spiritual ends; capable of uniting and constituting a Christian society.

Apart from this, the most relevant way in which the Church can promote community through public worship is by removing all that makes it exclusive, in the way of ministerial, credal and sacramental barriers to Christian disciples. Especially is refusal of intercommunion, where it is desired, an offence against the only true equality, *i.e.* the deep equality of brotherhood. The Churches must attend to this matter before they gain the right to speak of world-community. For the rest, to meet the social circumstances

of to-day, the duty and self-discipline of taking part in public worship should be emphasized, and the services themselves conducted with care, simplicity, beauty, clearness of speech, controlled and ordered movements. Special attention to children's services is required, that the love of corporate worship may be wakened early. Preaching should be ultimately to the heart, through the head. In ordinary parish churches, large choirs of men and women, as well as boys, under competent musical leadership, help to lift the soul above itself in worship and unfasten the bars of individuality, so that we enter the radiant world of personality where all are one because all are centred in the one Person, God, as known in Jesus Christ.

Of the three revolutionary forces at work in modern life, the intellectual has been the most ruinous to worship, because it has tended to scepticism on the part of those who lead the nation's thought. Our advance in knowledge has been through specialization. Reality has been abstracted into particular fields of study, and the play of the intellect directed exclusively to naturalistic terms of explanation. Truth is seen to be discovered, and no room seems left for revelation; aesthetic sensation is felt to be an end sufficient in itself; the good life is regarded as a matter of organizing our material resources. The values are thus treated as products of man's growing experience. They presuppose abstract ideals, says Dr. Julian Huxley, but there is no absolute of Truth, Beauty and Goodness. And he continues:

> 'The advance of natural science, logic and psychology has brought us to a stage at which God is no longer a useful hypothesis . . . The realization that magic is a false principle, and that control is to be achieved by science and its application, has removed the meaning from sacrificial ritual and petitionary prayer . . . The analysis of the human mind, with the discovery of its powers of projection and wish-fulfilment, its hidden subconsciousness and unrealized repressions, makes it unnecessary to believe that conversion and the like are due to any external power, and unscientific to ascribe inner certitude to guidance by God . . .
>
> "Peor and Baalim
> Forsake their temples dim . . ."
>
> . . . and Milton's God too is joining the limbo.'

It may be indeed that Milton's God is following the pagan deities into limbo, but Christians will agree with Dr. Huxley that this is a very good thing. He is certainly not the God and Father of Jesus Christ, nor is He the authentic God of the Church of England. Likewise we should rejoice to see the end of sacrificial ritual and of the magical idea of prayer. Dr. Huxley gets most of his kick against religion and worship out of the supernaturalism, or dualism, with which he identifies them.

Yet let me also quote a more reverent writer, whose conclusions

are therefore even more disturbing :

> 'I attend my college chapel,' says Mr. E. L. Woodward, the domestic bursar of All Souls, 'as a matter of formality on set services of commemoration . . . I regard these services . . . as possessing a significance, but a significance outside the range of my powers of interpretation. I feel about them as I felt when, in a Moslem country, I listened with respect to a circle of devout men reading the Koran . . . It is impossible for anyone brought up as I was brought up, and living in my environment, not to be moved very deeply by the Gospels and by the preaching of St. Paul. I cannot read the chapter in St. Luke describing the Nativity without thinking that, if things happened so, there would be no unsolved secret to elude mankind century after century. I do not know any ceremony on earth more profound, more humble, and more magnificent in hope than the Christian mass . . . (But) the guidance of many centuries has failed us; the interlocked structure of history and logic upon which the Christian doctrine is based and the visible Church is founded can no longer satisfy the mind.' He also says: 'I held fast to the deepest personal relationships, my marriage, the memory of my home. In such . . . I came nearest to reality. I wanted to extend this understanding of reality until there was no separation between myself and the universe . . . Yet I can never pass a door which is not even fully closed.'

For this Anglo-Catholic unbeliever, as for the scientific atheist, the trouble would again seem to be the theological supernaturalism which has been imposed upon the Gospel. It prevents men from extending their daily understanding of reality, given through personal relationships and through all good life, and work and study, into a theistic interpretation of ultimate Reality. One cannot fit life's ordinary happenings into the interventionary view of God. 'The bed is shorter than a man can stretch himself upon it.'

A restatement of theology is evidently necessary; but a wider and more healing influence will come through drastic changes in our forms of public worship.

> 'An alliance between religion, which must be retained unless the world is to perish, and complete rationality, which must come, unless also the world is to perish,' is to be achieved, said Thomas Hardy, 'by means of the interfusing effect of poetry.'

Religion, indeed, calls for more poetry, and for less evident theology, as its vehicle of worship and praise. This means a new creed, written in the spirit of *Te Deum*. It means the removal from worship of the more technical theological terms, like grace, salvation and redemption. It means a thorough recasting of the Psalter. It means a very careful choice of Bible readings, directed towards teaching the right method of divine governance and guidance in creation, in history and in the human soul; and the truth in myth and allegory must be plain for all to see. It means bringing the figure of Jesus into the forefront of worship; focussing attention on His gospel, and laying emphasis on Christian discipleship as the way to reasonable, brave, unselfish, happy service of God. The hesitating English instinct towards liturgical reform must be hastened, in a genuinely religious and creative spirit.

Earlier work can only be incorporated by reshaping it and giving it a greater unity. The tradition which we have already received in the Prayer Book is on the right lines; but the paradox is profoundly true that if we are conservative enough we can afford to be thoroughly radical. Those who would only fiddle with revision resemble but the revisers of 1549. It is not enough to omit a word or a sentence here and there; or to protest that the technical terms of traditional Christianity need only to be explained, on the analogy that we also need to learn the technical terms of music before we can understand it. The trouble is that often the theological language either does not, and cannot, now convey to us the spiritual truth which it originally intended, or was misconceived even then. What we need is '1552' revision. And there is no reason why we should not proceed with it experimentally. Probably semi-official approval could be gained; especially if the innovators pursued a common policy, and if experiments were conducted by men of pastoral wisdom and recognized gifts, in specially suitable areas where there was also lay support. The experiments should be conceived in the spirit of a reunited and truly national Church.

In a group of churches, working under one direction in each area, there should, I think, be two main types of regular public worship: one after the traditional Church of England type, revised, of course; the other after a freer type, conforming to outline schemes of the essential elements. The type of a fixed and stately liturgy would be best continued in the mother church of such a group. It should impress as hieratic, yet not be remote; every word full of meaning and capable of being taken to the heart, so as to bring God near. A more splendid ritual than ordinary should mark its services on the great occasions of Church and State. The freer type of regular worship should usually be followed in the district and Nonconformist churches of the group. The church would then include the most varied types of mind and character, as well as of tradition, that constitute the English nation.

The cause must be advanced judiciously, yet without flinching. If its ultimate triumph is secure by reason of the national programme of religious and general education to which we now look forward, yet the gain to Church and nation would be greatest if the official Church could be induced to proceed with its reforms now. It was the greatness of Archbishop Cranmer both to recognize the strength and nature of the three revolutionary forces at work in his time, and also to see how they might be used in the service of God to give greater reality to public worship. Through his efforts the Church was brought to match the hour. Can it be brought now to match a similar, perhaps even greater, hour?

NATIONAL CHRISTIAN REUNION

By the Rev. W. G. Fallows, M.A., Vicar of Styvechale, Coventry.

IN January 1840 a Roman Catholic priest named Spencer came to Oxford to suggest to the Tractarians that simultaneous prayer should be offered once a week for the restoration of unity to the Church. Newman was hostile and irritable. After much discussion, however, it was resolved to ask for episcopal sanction. Pusey approached the Bishop of Oxford, who in turn took refuge with the Archbishop. The Archbishop, William Howley, in his reply indicated a certain scepticism about the efficacy of prayer for an unattainable object.[1] Many have been the prayers offered for Christian Unity, many the reunion schemes, many the conferences and official and semi-official conversations for the healing of the divisions of the Church, and their frequency and momentum have increased during the present century, but the outlook for Christian Reunion to-day is in some ways less promising than it was twenty years ago. But Archbishop Howley's scepticism is not justified and the healing of the divisions is, we believe, not unattainable.

The ninth aim of the Modern Churchmen's Union is 'To maintain the historic comprehensiveness of the Church of England and to foster fellowship and co-operation in Word and Sacrament with other Christian Societies.' This aim can only be fulfilled as we work and think and pray for the visible and organic union of the Christian Church. We are only concerned in this paper with National Christian reunion, but we recognize that the ultimate objective is the union of the world-wide Church, and our more limited objective of national reunion must always be considered against the background of the wider union and must be so devised and forwarded as to be contributory to it. The Union of Christendom involves East and West, Anglican and Free Church, Lutheran and Reformed. Our Lord's prayer that his followers may be one will only be fulfilled when they are all in full communion with each other and when the one Church displays that charitableness between its members which should characterize the Christian society. 'The fundamental anomaly,' as the present Archbishop of Canterbury says, 'is that any two disciples of our Lord should not be in communion with one another.'

There are some who argue that to promote schemes of home reunion is only to imperil the achievement of larger schemes,

[1] See Faber, *Oxford Apostles*, pp. 418-419.

and in particular eventual union with Rome and the East. We believe precisely the opposite is true. The way to Rome is locked, bolted and barred. The key itself is locked in the Vatican. Rome does not recognize us at present. Our orders are invalid; we have not the Apostolic succession; we are just as much out of order at Rome as are Independents and Presbyterians. In the encyclical letter *Mortalium Animos* (1928) Roman Catholics have been prohibited from taking part in any conference on unity. We do not believe that any achievement of national reunion which retained Catholic Church order would make it any more difficult or any more likely for Rome to recognize us. Nor do we believe that our relations with the Eastern Church would be permanently impaired. A great gulf still separates the Eastern Church from the reformed churches among which the Anglican Church uniquely stands. We desire earnestly closer relations and eventual full communion with the Eastern Church: meanwhile we are more impatient to be in communion with our brother in Bermondsey than with our cousin in Byzantium.

Union is primarily God's will, not ours. We desire it and work for it because we believe it is part of the Divine order and purpose that the unity of the Godhead should be manifest in the unity of the Christian fellowship in the world.

> 'As we believe in one God, Father, Son and Holy Ghost,' says John Knox in his 'Confessions,' 'so do we most constantly believe that there hath been, now is and to the end of the world shall be, one kirk, which kirk is catholic.'

Division is a denial of the very genius of the faith in which men are one in Christ Jesus. It is true that in its deepest nature the Church is always one. Our task is not to create it but to exhibit it, for in its historical form the Church is rent by divisions which seriously impair its witness to the one Gospel. In his recent address to the Convocation of Canterbury the Archbishop puts the question which should be the burden of every Christian:

> 'How can we persuade an incredulous world that we have the secret of that unity which overleaps all barriers of religious and cultural inheritance, of economic status or of sex itself, so that we become one man in Christ Jesus if we present to that world the appearance of competing sects? The obligation to attain a real and organic unity of the Church as the Holy Spirit may guide is urgent.'

This is too great an issue to reduce to the parochial level. But the experience of the work-a-day parson is not irrelevant. He sees the grave effects of our disunity when, for instance, spiritual provision is being made for new centres of population, for workers' hostels and new community centres which are springing up in many of our industrial towns. Clergy are being welcomed in many

factories. If there were recognizably one Church of the English people these new departures would be much more numerous and more fruitful. In the field of education the tale is the same. Our divisions and our competitions have been inimical to educational progress. As the social implications of the Gospel are being increasingly realized, so does our lack of unity become the more serious and the more deadly.

Reunion must be on the largest possible oecumenical basis. Are we then justified in advocating national reunion? God save us from insularity. The forces of nationality and liberty have been powerful in shaping the modern world, but unbridled national sovereignty is largely responsible for disrupting it, and must give way to some federal system of world government. But will there not be some place for national idiosyncrasy in any future international order? The family of nations will develop most fully like the human family when the natural talent of each individual child is free to make its contribution to the family circle. But it is still one family. So must it be with the Church of Christ. A Church may be one in the divine order and still share the diversity of the natural order in which it is planted. The unity must be as real as the diversity. To-day we have the diversity without the unity. The problem of Christian union is so vast that it can only advance piecemeal. Now the ties of kinship and language are still the strongest ties of human affinity. The union of churches with a common location, whose members are neighbours in a physical sense sharing a common national life and whose ecclesiastical traditions are diverse but not irreconcilable, is the immediate goal, we believe, of practical Christian statesmanship to-day. Such considerations point to national Christian reunion as a step in the right direction.

Considerable progress has already been achieved in the sphere of co-operation between the Churches. Old animosities and resentments have largely died down, though they still raise their ugly heads in the columns of ecclesiastical journalism. The formation of the British Council of Churches and of corresponding Councils of Christian congregations in many localities is the achievement of that better spirit which has increasingly prevailed between the Churches during the present century. The Religion and Life movement is a splendid example of co-operative evangelism and of common witness in presenting the Gospel as relevant to the whole life of men. But the more difficult problem of organic union has been of late, and still is, in abeyance. There are three stages in our journey which might be described as amity, comity and unity. Amity has been largely achieved; comity partially achieved; unity has still to come.

It has been acidly and not quite fairly said that the Church of England is distinguished both for initiating unity discussions and for creating the difficulties which prevent them from arriving at any conclusion. Certainly the Bishops of the Anglican Communion have shown a worthy concern with the problem. The encyclical letter issued by the first Lambeth Conference in 1867 expressed 'the deep sorrow with which they view the divided condition of the flock of Christ.' The 1888 Conference produced the Lambeth Quadrilateral laying down the fourfold basis for reunion. The Conference in 1908 explicitly repudiated the policy of absorption :

> 'We must fix our eyes on the Church of the future, which is to be adorned with all the precious things both theirs and ours. We must constantly desire not compromise but comprehension, not uniformity but unity.'

The 1920 Conference represents the high-water mark of this Lambeth tradition, and the 'Appeal to all Christian People' which it issued remains one of the most significant documents in the voluminous history of reunion schemes and proposals. Here was penitence, wisdom and vision. The claim for a constitutional episcopacy in a united Church was made on the grounds of 'history and of present experience' and not of 'apostolic succession,' the spiritual efficacy of the sacraments of non-episcopal Churches was recognized, and Anglicans expressed their readiness to accept a form of Commission for ministry in the wider Church.

> 'It is not in our power,' says the Appeal, 'to know how far this suggestion may be acceptable to those to whom we offer it. We can only say that we offer it in all sincerity as a token of our longing that all ministries of grace, their and ours, shall be available for the service of our Lord in a united Church.'

One result of this appeal was the setting up of official conversations between representatives of the Bishops on the one hand, and of the Federal Council of the Free Churches on the other. The bold prophetic ring of 1920 was not evident in 1930, and many Free Churchmen regarded the references to unity in the 1930 Report as retrograde. The Bishops in their encyclical letter said :

> 'We feel that the aspirations of the last Lambeth Conference have not failed, but are standing the strain of the attempt to translate words into action.'

Just how well they are standing the strain is indicated by the fact that they are still standing it. In spite of their disappointments the Free Churchmen agreed to continue the conversations, which culminated in the 'Outline of a Union' scheme for the Church of England and the Evangelical Free Churches of England. This outline scheme prepared by the Research Group of the 'Friends of Reunion' was commended to the careful consideration of the

Church by the Convocations of Canterbury and York and by the Federal Council to its constituent denominations. None of the Churches have committed themselves to the detailed proposals, but the scheme is a practical attempt to envisage a united Church of England in the future. The scheme embodies the fundamental principle of comprehension, incorporating episcopal, presbyteral and congregational elements in the form of Church government and the use of different forms of free and liturgical worship side by side. The compilers of the scheme were indebted to the Proposed Scheme of Reunion for South India. If any future negotiations between the Anglican and Free Churches take this outline scheme as a starting point, we shall almost certainly be faced by the same opposition which is now being vociferously organized to sabotage the scheme for Christian reunion in South India.

There are difficulties which must be frankly faced. Centuries of isolation and divergent development have created a marked difference in the *ethos* of the Anglican and Free Church world. The chasuble and the frock coat may belong to the same sartorial family, but there are deep-seated psychological repulsions on both sides. Mutual charity, increasing familiarity one with another and loyalty to the Spirit of Jesus Christ will break down the barriers. The greatest enemy of national reunion is the narrow and exclusive sacerdotalism of a section of our own Church. For practical reasons the Church must draw a line somewhere, but when she forgets the line is arbitrarily drawn disastrous results follow. A wise maxim would be, it is right sometimes to exclude but when in doubt include. 'He that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out.' In every period of Church history, however, and not least in our own, the cry has gone up in one form or another, 'Except ye be circumcised after the custom of Moses, ye cannot be saved.' Montanists and Novationists in the early Church, and Puritans in the sixteenth century, have stood for this rigidly exclusive principle. In the early period the Roman Church, in the sixteenth century the Anglican Church, stood for the more liberal interpretation of the principle of exclusion. To-day the parties have changed sides. Exclusion has become the war-cry of the Ultra-Montane Roman and the extreme Anglo-Catholic section of the Church of England, while the sons of the Puritan stand for the catholic principle of inclusion.[2] The struggle is the age-long one between prophet and priest. Their functions should be mutually complementary and not exclusive. They can be combined when the liberal and inclusive spirit prevails. National Christian reunion to-day can only be achieved as the liberal and inclusive spirit prevails over the exclusive and rigorist interpretation of

[2] See Streeter, *Restatement and Reunion*, pp. 180-1.

Church order. We believe that the true spirit of the Church of England is liberal and inclusive, and we have never doubted that in being so she is loyal to the Spirit of Jesus Christ.

A crucial question and one most fruitful of dissension in the problem of reunion is the question of the ministry. Anglicans are wise in advocating the acceptance of the historic episcopacy in any United Church of the future. We make reunion impossible, however, when we assert the Apostolic Succession in the form in which it is taught by Anglo-Catholics. To assert that one form of church order is of divine appointment and necessary to the nature of the Church is to draw a conclusion which neither the Scriptures, nor history, nor experience will justify. Genevan, Roman and Anglo-Roman spectacles fog rather than clarify and should not be used in the reading of the New Testament and early Church history. Dr. Headlam, the Bishop of Gloucester, has done great service to the cause of truth in resisting in a scholarly manner and eirenic spirit the Anglo-Catholic opposition to the South Indian Scheme. In a letter to *The Times* he says :

> 'To add to the binding articles of the Christian faith is essentially uncatholic. It is one of the most fruitful causes of Christian division, whether in the Thirty-nine Articles or the Westminster Confession or the Council of Trent. For instance, the Apostolic Succession in the form in which it is taught by Anglo-Catholics was not known in the Church certainly for four centuries, is not taught in any Anglican formula, is not accepted by a majority of the members of the Church of England, and is based on theological confusion.'

There is nothing in the true Anglican position which prevents a full recognition of the validity of the orders and sacraments of the non-episcopal Churches. The Anglican reformers never questioned the validity of the non-episcopal orders of the continental Churches, and Articles 19 and 23 were so worded as not to unchurch Reformed Churches. The first generation of Anglican reformers in the sixteenth century did not regard relations with the non-episcopal reformed churches as raising any problems at all. Hooker expressed the position which was maintained at the Elizabethan Reformation settlement in these words :

> 'The whole Church visible being the true original subject of all power, it hath not ordinarily allowed any other than bishops alone to ordain : howbeit as the ordinary course is ordinarily in all things to be observed, so it may be in some cases not unnecessary that we decline from the ordinary ways.'[3]

The same position is maintained by the great Caroline divines. Laud in his thesis for the degree of B.D. maintained that there could be no true Church without bishops. The Regius Professor of Divinity publicly rebuked him as 'a seditious person who would

[3] *The Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity*, Bk. VII, xiv, 11.

unchurch the Reformed Protestant Churches beyond the seas, and sow division between us and those who were our brethren, by this novel Popish position.'[4] Laud himself, however, declared on a later occasion 'The *Ecclesia Anglicana* and the other reformed Churches are sisters dwelling in the same Catholic habitation.' The practice of receiving Protestant ministers into the English Church without re-ordination is attested by several writers in the seventeenth century. Thus, for instance, Cosin, who was a High Churchman:

> 'If at any time a minister ordained in these French Churches came to incorporate himself in ours, and to receive a public charge or cure of souls among us in the Church of England (as I have known some of them to have done so of late, and can instance in many other before my time), our Bishops did not re-ordain him before they admitted him to his charge, as they would have done if his former ordination here in France had been void. Nor did our laws require more of him than to declare his public consent to the religion received amongst us, and to subscribe the articles established. And I love not to be herein more wise or harder than our own church is.'[5]

This recognition of non-episcopal ministries has never been withdrawn. The Church of England has its own rules for ordination but has never condemned non-episcopal orders. A necessary step in the direction of home reunion would be the mutual and unequivocal recognition of orders. Reunion can only proceed between equals and not between disparate partners.

That robust Anglican, Charles Kingsley, saw in the liberal and evangelical ideal of the English Church the visible Christian society that was most consonant with the particular genius of the English people. 'I say that the Church of England is wonderfully and mysteriously fitted for the souls of a free Norse-Saxon race.' The Church of England if she is true to herself has a glorious opportunity of promoting Christian reunion. The oft-quoted words of the French layman, Count Joseph de Maistre, are worth recalling:

> 'If ever, and everything invites it, there should be a movement towards reunion among the Christian bodies, it seems likely that the Church of England should be the one to give it impulse. Presbyterianism, as its French nature rendered probable, went to extremes. Between us and those who practise a worship which we think wanting in form and substance there is too wide an interval; we cannot understand one another. But the English Church, which touches us with one hand, touches with the other those with whom we have no point of contact.'[6]

The typically Anglican spirit is a mediating and compromising one. Its moderate position makes it an easy target for the sneers of extremists on both sides. But we need not feel ashamed of our

[4] Prynne, *Life of Laud*, p. 2.
[5] *Works*, Vol. IV, p. 403.
[6] *Considerations sur la France* (1796).

'moderation.' In his admirable book *Restatement and Reunion* the late Canon Streeter says:

> 'τὸ μέσον was the ideal which governed Greek Art, and, in theory at any rate, Greek life as a whole. The spirit of balance and moderation has produced the English Constitution, which, with all its patent defects, has become the pattern for the government of the civilized world. After all "sweet reasonableness" of the considerate and synthetic temper ultimately implies that faith in man, which alone makes cities habitable, and that unhurried faith in God, which sooner or later avails to uproot mountains also.'

What is the source of this moderate spirit which characterizes the Church of England? Canon Streeter suggests that whereas Romanism and Puritanism reproduce in the main St. Augustine's interpretation of Christianity, the outlook of the Anglican Church is more akin to the interpretation which we find in the Greek Fathers. The extreme pre-destination doctrine and the *ex opere operato* doctrine of the sacraments were alike repudiated. The moderate position has special temptations of its own. But it enshrines a spirit and a temper which would play a great part in healing the divisions of the Church.

What can we do now? Pending the formation of a full organic union, is there anything we can do to hasten the time and to strengthen the hands of our leaders in this bold spiritual enterprise? It is doubtful if the representative leaders and theologians of the Church can get much further until there is a widespread desire for unity and a much greater expression of it in the localities. This points to local action. Unhappily Anglicans themselves are sharply divided on this question. Phillips Brooks once said, speaking of the Church of England, that the difference between a high churchman and a low churchman was that the high churchman intoned the service and the low churchman intoned the sermon. O happy Church if that were all. The differences are deep and fundamental. There is a theological cleavage which is tending to become more marked. Any scheme of national reunion, any local action which we may take, must first weigh responsibly and charitably the danger of splitting the Anglican Communion. There are some who deplore any expression of unity in word and sacrament before the final goal of organic unity is reached. We liberal Churchmen hold that the objective of Christian union will be reached the more quickly if there is a sharing of a common Christian experience in the ministry of the word and a fellowship in the sacrament of the Holy Communion. We plead for a free pulpit and an open altar, not in the spirit of licence or anarchy, but because the claims of Christian fellowship make such a policy for us imperative.

Canon Anson tells the story of an old clergyman who ventured

to give advice to his new and inexperienced bishop: 'My lord, take my advice: whatever you do, keep off the Sacrament. You will find it a very nasty subject.' Alas that so wholesome a subject should gain so unsavoury a reputation! We shall not ourselves follow the advice. Open Communion would assist the achievement of inter-communion. It would not, as some argue, make us content with our divisions. The opposite is true. The closer the fellowship the keener will be the desire for full union. It is by practising unity that we shall achieve unity. Nor are we disloyal to the history and teaching of the Anglican Church in advocating the assembly of different denominations around the parish altar as well as around the parish pump. Occasional conformity has always been recognized in the Anglican Church. There have been, from the seventeenth century onwards, some nonconformists who communicated at the parish church, not on grounds of political and official expedience, but moved by the purest motives of Christian fellowship. The debate on this subject in the reign of Queen Anne clearly showed that the Church of England placed no bar against occasional conformity. In 1870 there was one of those tea-cup storms in which Christian men are sometimes engulfed. The Dean of Westminster invited the committee appointed to revise the New Testament to a service of Holy Communion in the Abbey before they began their task. Among the communicants were several Scotch Presbyterians and English Nonconformists, including Dr. Vance-Smith, a Unitarian. The Bishop of Salisbury, a High Churchman, confessed in Convocation that he felt thankful that they had grace to come. Most of the bishops present at the debate echoed his sentiments. But the High Church party raised a storm, and in the memorials which were sent to the Archbishop of Canterbury (Tait) were such phrases as 'a dishonour to our Lord and Saviour of the gravest and most emphatic character,' 'a gross profanation of the sacrament,' 'an outrage on revealed religion' and 'a horrible sacrilege.' In the course of his reply to the memorials Archbishop Tait wrote:

> 'Some of the memorialists are indignant at the admission of any dissenters, however orthodox, to the Holy Communion in our Church. I confess that I have no sympathy with such objections. I consider that the interpretation which these memorialists put upon the rubric to which they appeal, at the end of the Confirmation service, is quite untenable. As at present advised, I believe the rubric to apply solely to our own people, and not to those members of foreign or dissenting bodies who occasionally conform.'

This considered decision must possess great authority and still represents the opinion of many members of the Church of England. In 1933 the Upper Houses of the Convocations of Canterbury and York passed a resolution enabling the bishop, if requested, to

approve the admission of baptized communicant members of other denominations to Holy Communion according to the Anglican rite. Action has occasionally been taken under this resolution, but the bishop concerned is not always prepared to give permission, nor does the resolution enable Anglicans to take part in the Communion service of other Churches, even on special occasions. Greater facilities for open communion would, we believe, assist the cause of national reunion and would do more than anything else to create the will and the vision of which Christian union will be born.

Hazlitt in one of his essays writes of a discriminating friend: 'It always struck me as a singular proof of good taste, good sense, and liberal thinking in an old friend who had Paine's *Rights of Man* and Burke's *Reflections on the French Revolution* bound up in one volume, and who said that, both together, they made a very good book.' So might it be with the Churches if the treasuries of their thought and history and devotion could be bound up in one volume. We for our part could bring among other things that delicate blending of law and liberty, of order and freedom, which is one of our most priceless treasures. There is a real danger of passing into an ecclesiastical ice-age if some of the forces now impeding Christian union should gain control. Twenty-three years have passed since the bishops of the Anglican Communion addressed their appeal to 'All Christian people.' The time is now surely ripe for action, for a scheme of Christian union at home, bold and large, commensurate both with the peril and the opportunity of these days.

THE RELATIONS OF CHURCH AND STATE

By the Rev. Canon J. S. Bezzant, B.D., M.A., Chaplain, R.N.V.R., Chancellor of Liverpool Cathedral.

THE Establishment of the Church of England is a result of the Reformation Settlement. By her Convocations the Church declared her teaching, the nature of her ministrations, and the position she claimed; these are embodied in her Prayer-book. The Acts of Uniformity represent the State's acceptance and legislative authorization. To-day this Settlement implies the following significant limitations of the Church's independence as a self-governing society.

1. The State recognizes an Assembly of the Church. On all matters ecclesiastical except doctrine (which is reserved to Con-

vocation) this Assembly can frame Measures for submission to Parliament. Parliament may either sanction these Measures or veto them, but not amend them.

2. For dealing with questions of doctrine, worship, ritual and the special obligations of the clergy, the Church has her own courts; but when their decisions are not accepted the final appeal is to the Crown, acting by the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council. This supreme court does not decide the theological significance of creeds or acts of worship, on which matters (and others) it may have the assistance of qualified assessors. It adjudicates finally upon disputed questions of ecclesiastical law, where necessary by deciding the legal interpretation of accepted formularies.

3. Appointment to bishoprics and to certain other offices is made by the Crown on the advice of the Prime Minister.

4. The Convocations may meet only as summoned by Royal Writ.

The State, which in our democracy is the organ of and responsible to the nation, grants toleration to all Churches, but by the Establishment recognizes the Church of England as the national expression of the Christian religion in this country. A national Church does not imply that the Church must foster a peculiar brand of Christianity as a State religion; it means that a Christian nation has decided to manage its own ecclesiastical affairs. The Church claims, the State concedes, that the Church's *functions* are derived from God in Christ, but the Church accepts its *office* as a national Church from the State.

Considered as a denomination, our Church is one among others, her active membership now being but a fraction of the nation. As the Established Church she has the use of large revenues dating from a time when her membership was practically co-extensive with the nation. Parochial and other clergymen enjoy advantages to which, regarded as denominational ministers, they are not entitled. In return, the Church has special obligations; her office is to bring Christianity into the lives of all people who will accept her ministrations.

The extreme denominational weakness of our Church would make the continuance of its Establishment impossible to maintain against even a moderate demand in the nation that it should be ended. For the same reason, plans for revising the conditions of Establishment, whereby the State should further modify the degree of control which it exercised when our affairs were more flourishing, have no relation to realities and are not worth discus-

sion. But neither the State nor the nation has any evident desire to disestablish the Church. The people are not hostile. They take some notice of Dr. Temple's pronouncements upon social and economic matters in which they are interested, but not of the religious grounds on which the Archbishop bases them; they are simply indifferent to our faith and doctrine as we present them. The Liberation Society may still be said to exist, but hardly to live. The Free Churches have fully shared in the general drift from institutional religion; they have nothing to gain from, and have no desire to see, such a further weakening of the forces of religion as Disestablishment would involve.

What would it involve? The repudiation by the State of an organ for the expression and application of Christian principles in the national life. This would encourage the prevailing feeling that religion is of small account in practical affairs, and confirm the already disquieting indifference to it. Precedents suggest that a large part, if not all, of the ancient endowments would be confiscated. In very many parishes, particularly rural parishes, the Church would no longer be able to support itself; the people would not, even if they could, make good the loss. It is more than doubtful whether the ancient cathedrals and parish churches would remain under our control. The Roman Church would certainly exploit our injuries, and would probably become the most influential church in this country.

The demand for Disestablishment, such as there is, comes from within the Church, from people who think either that it would secure what they call 'spiritual independence' or that such an act of voluntary renunciation would impress the workers and induce them to attend church. These are vain imaginations.

> '"Quite over the whole breadth of the way," to the reunion of Christendom, to pastoral efficiency, and to religious liberty, there straddles this terrible Apollyon of the State.'

These are not the words of some persecuted Christian in Germany or in some Axis-occupied country. They are written of our own land by one who not long since accepted a deanery from 'this terrible Apollyon of the State.' They are wild words. He says nothing to show how Disestablishment would remove the causes of disunion, increase pastoral efficiency, or religious liberty which, as often, seems to be a synonym for institutional irresponsibility. In fact, in addition to other disastrous consequences, Disestablishment, as the Archbishop of Canterbury said recently, 'would mean that we should be tied up with readjusting the machine for years to come when we ought to be concentrating on the real task of the Church.'

Three factors tend heavily against reasonable consideration of ecclesiastical affairs. First, the profound and far-reaching disturbance of traditional views and ways of life produced by the last war, continued in the subsequent years of increasing unsettlement, and which the present war has extended. Secondly, modern popular thought, a little tinctured by science but not by philosophy, and the traditional, easily-grasped scheme of theology, have fallen apart. The more reasonable attempts to bridge this ever-widening gap are hardly known to the people, even to the more educated. The Church has been fighting unsuccessful rearguard actions, while the theological movements which have had some influence with the clergy have been reactionary. Thirdly, and consequently, Churchmen have become more conscious of a cleavage between themselves and surrounding society and are oppressed by a sense of the increasing futility of their efforts. The feeling that we must at all costs be 'free' is one natural consequence of this sense of frustration. It would pass away if our efforts were more fruitful.

Against this background the feeling that the Church is in bondage to the State must be set and understood. It is an illusion. Consider the points which some regard as intolerable State interference.

1. Parliament's rejection of the revised Prayer-book. As recently as 1919 the Church freely conceded the right of Parliament to do exactly what it did without even seeking the wider freedom given two years later to the Church of Scotland. The Church Assembly is heavily and quite needlessly overweighted with *ex officio* members of the House of Clergy.[1] The House of Laity consists largely of persons of means and leisure, who alone are able to attend the too frequent sessions in London; they are so indirectly elected that even their names are unknown to their constituents. The Assembly's support for the revised book was secured less by enthusiasm for it than by sympathy for the bishops' desire to restore order. Even so, the Assembly voting showed that the book did not represent the united will of the Church; while the manner in which lay Churchmen reacted to its rejection is evidence that the Commons' vote reflected their religious sense and judgement. The Parliamentary debate was marked by concern to do what was best in the interests of both Church and Nation; and, as we all know, the adverse vote was determined by the two proposals

[1] It was recently represented as one of the sorrows of our bishops-suffragan that they are not entitled to sit *ex officio* in the Assembly! Archdeacons, a phalanx of episcopal nominees, should have no place in a representative Assembly unless elected.

on which there was least agreement in the Church[2] and which, even by many who desired or were willing to accept them, are recognized to be peculiarly open to misunderstanding or to encourage superstition. The Archbishops repeatedly declared that there was no question of any change in doctrine involved: it therefore cannot be said that Parliament tried to dictate doctrine to the Church. The Commons' vote simply decided that it was not in the nation's interest that the book should become a legal alternative to that of 1662. In these circumstances, to sacrifice the advantages which Establishment gives to the Church in performing her great task, rather than bow to the nation's wish, would justify the people in not taking us seriously. Who could have confidence in the judgement of a Church upon the great issues of life, religion, modern knowledge and the national welfare, if it rashly raised so large an issue to gain so small an advantage?

2. The appointment of bishops. The method which prevails is in theory anomalous. In practice two things are certain. Synodical elections are frequently deplorable in methods and failures in results. Our English procedure secures bishops who compare favourably with any in the world. The Prime Minister, if he is to retain his great office, cannot be a man of narrow outlook and sympathies; he can easily get reliable information; he holds office because he has the confidence of a majority of the nation, Churchfolk among others; he does but select from those whom the Church has commissioned as priests; his nominations may occasionally be obnoxious to this or that party of ecclesiastical extremists, but they very rarely even surprise those who take any interest in such matters and never offend any substantial body of Churchpeople. The powers of the cathedral chapters to refuse election, and of the archbishops and bishops to refuse consecration, are not empty forms, for the willingness to incur the very severe penalties for conscientious refusal would make a generally unacceptable appointment virtually impossible nowadays. The bishops' office gives them such influence in the moral and social life of the nation that the State cannot surrender the exercise of the royal prerogative in their appointment. Even the Papacy has often wisely recognized the right of the State to an effective voice in the selection of bishops.

3. The final court of appeal in ecclesiastical causes. It can easily be represented as anomalous that the judges in this court need not be Christians. But can we really take seriously any idea

[2] The revision of the service of Holy Communion by the introduction of a few archaisms into it, and the reservation of a portion of the consecrated bread and wine for the communion of the sick. The means already provided is valued by the laity except where they have been influenced by teaching that they ought to desire something else.

that baptism and the acceptance of certain theological beliefs would secure to our most experienced and eminent judges a special measure of divine assistance in the interpretation of issues of fact or of law? In giving judgement upon her members, the Church affects the rights and reputations of men who are also citizens, and these the State must and will protect. There is no reason why the Judicial Committee should be less qualified to deal with appeals in ecclesiastical causes than it is to deal with appeals on the many and varied matters which come before its court from many parts of the Empire. History shows that, but for this court, bigotry and obscurantism, such as we now deplore, would have prevailed not once nor twice: its judgements have been more liberal to all parties in the Church than have those of the ecclesiastical courts below. The words of the late Alfred Fawkes are wise:

> 'That the Final Court of Appeal should be civil and not ecclesiastical is, as things stand, a condition of the mental and moral independence of the clergy and of the freedom of the Church. . . . It would be a measure at once of revolution and reaction were these expert judges to be replaced by clergymen without legal knowledge, temper, or training; unaccustomed to deal with evidence and subject to the prepossessions of their class.' [3]

The ordinary common-sense judgement of our laity, as of other Englishmen, that the objections raised on these three matters are trivial and trumpery, is sound. The value of our English institutions depends much less upon their abstract theoretical merits than upon the traditions, tone and temper which prevail in their use.

'Spiritual independence' is an ambiguous term. Its natural meaning is freedom in the things of the spirit, and the Establishment in modern England does not interfere with it. But it is common to speak of the Church as a spiritual or divine society, and so to distinguish it from other societies, and then to regard all its business and activities as 'spiritual' in contrast to those of the State which are 'secular.' This can easily become false in itself and misleading in its implications. It leads some Churchfolk to confuse spiritual freedom with institutional independence; and it is institutional independence that our modern advocates of Disestablishment want. Disestablishment would not secure their desire. Apart from other considerations, our internal divisions would be fatal to it. Parliament would not pass any Measure which would, or even might, allow one party of Church-citizens to force its will upon others. A most carefully drawn constitution would be essential if the disestablished Church were not to disintegrate. Thereafter, any important changes in the constitution would still require Parliamentary consent, and questions of inter-

[3] *The Genius of the English Church*, pp. 17*f*.

pretation involving the temporal rights of churchpeople would still have to be finally determined in a Crown court. The greater independence possessed by the Free Churches is due rather to their more free constitutions and doctrinal bases than to any difference of principle between these and our own formularies in their relation to the State.

At a meeting in the Albert Hall the Archbishop of Canterbury said that its purpose was 'to affirm the right and the duty of the Church to declare its judgement upon social facts and social movements, and to lay down principles which should govern the ordering of society.' Professor Leonard Hodgson points out that, while an established church possesses that right, a church not established has no special authority to perform the function of conscience for the community, having no *locus standi* not possessed by any other societies within the nation.[4] The significance of this fact is overlooked by the archbishop when he says the Church's commission is 'wholly independent of any earthly authority.' It is not so *wholly* independent; the Established Church holds, as Charles Smyth says, 'a secondary and supplementary commission from the nation to be the national symbol and expression of the Christian faith of the English people.' That is implied in Dr. Temple's pronouncements upon the principles of social and economic life, and is the reason why his utterances receive so much attention. As Primate of All England, a much greater importance is attached to his words than when he said the same things earlier in his career. And there seems to be some confusion in a mind of great clarity when the archbishop asserts that Establishment carries values for the life of the nation that could not be replaced, but adds that Disestablishment is a question for the State and for ourselves as citizens, not for the Church or for us as members of the Church. The unreal dichotomy between the Christian as Churchman and the Christian as citizen is exactly what Dr. Temple is so concerned to repudiate in other social matters.

Forecasts of what the future may bring were never more uncertain than to-day. Times of great upheaval and strain always produce apocalyptic dreams of future blessedness, but theologians have good reason to know that the value of these visions and plans is not in their reliability as sober predictions. Notwithstanding all that is now said about the struggle for freedom and the preservation of our liberties, conditions after the war may lead to a more bureaucratic, if not totalitarian, form of the State in this country.

[4] In a Cambridge University sermon on June 14th, 1942. He points out how much stronger was the position of the Old Testament prophets in this respect than was the position of Jesus and his disciples. See the lecture, *Religion and Politics,* by Charles Smyth. (S.P.C.K.)

Should that happen, and the State move to the 'Left,' the Establishment will go, and all the Churches might find themselves hard put to it to maintain liberty in preaching, teaching, and publication, and to resist discrimination against Christians in public life. Should such a State move to the 'Right,' the Churches may be tempted to barter essential freedom for State patronage and the kingdoms of this world. In either event, any totalitarian or bureaucratic Church tied to a State of like character would suffer grievous loss in the long run. If, on the other hand, radical upheavals are avoided and, while extending its direct responsibilities in various national concerns, the State remains democratic, it is possible to anticipate the ecclesiastical future more confidently.

Overshadowing all else is the vast ebb-tide of religious faith. It gives an imperative urgency to our circumstances.

1. It is vain to suppose that administrative reforms in the Church have any important bearing on this grave matter. The true and only justification for all such measures is that they are morally just and practically wise. All of them together will do nothing to bring people back to the Church. Since the Enabling Act, we have had no small experience of this truth. The Measures passed and the procedures adopted under that Act have vastly increased the amount of centralized organization, the amount of money spent in establishing and maintaining it, and the administrative powers of the persons who control it. Whatever may be said in its favour, the entire very costly process has done nothing to increase the real strength and influence of the Church. On the contrary, the years which have witnessed such a large increase in this centralized machinery and bureaucratic control have also seen a continuous and now alarming decline in the number of baptisms, Sunday-school teachers and scholars, confirmation candidates, and communicants — in fact, in all of what we may regard as the vital statistics of the Church's life.

2. There is one reason, plain and unmistakable, why our churches are so empty. It is that the people do not believe what the Church is supposed to teach, and often does teach. As generally understood, this no longer inspires life or effort. People do not feel that the valuable parts of it form a clear and true message of the meaning, purpose, value and destiny of human life. The more educated have been a long time in this case, and the same feeling has now permeated the mass of the people who know not the how or the why of it; many features of modern life confirm their condition; while the reactionary movements which have influenced the clergy have only made their outlook and speech on specifically religious matters more unintelligible to the laity, educated and

uneducated alike. 'Extravagance,' says Dr. Raven,

> 'not to say exaggerated obscurantism, is unhappily of the essence of this reaction. At a time when . . . abler minds in Christendom were beginning to respond to the new outlook in science, these "revolutionaries" reverted to the legends and superstitions of the old order, or to an irrationalism which contentedly writes meaningless rhetoric and justifies it as the proper language to apply to the ineffable. The reasonable was renounced in favour of the numinous, the ethical and prophetic in favour of the apocalyptic and eschatological. "Liberal," "rational," "modernist" became terms of abuse. History was made subordinate to facts never actually observable and to theological ideas current in the early Church . . . Christianity was being reduced to the level of an improved Mithraism; . . . the apologetic rejected a generation before—"the Universe is illogical: Christianity is illogical: therefore Christianity explains the Universe"—was being put forward as the latest version of Catholic orthodoxy.'[5]

The Oxford Movement and its outcome, Anglo-Catholicism, have now had a long run. They have never taken hold of the people as did Wesleyanism or the Evangelical revival. Of one of the Services I can testify that a practising Anglo-Catholic layman is very rare. Not only the people generally, but the churchgoing laity, regular or occasional, remain what Anglo-Catholics call 'Protestant' in mind and outlook. Not so the clergy, of whom possibly a majority are to-day in varying degrees of sympathy with this form of Catholicism. The result is a disastrous cleavage in thought, feeling and methods of expression between clergy and laity. Anglo-Catholicism has produced something like 'a Church within a Church.' Many of the clergy, former acolytes and servers, have never known any other form of Christian faith or practice. Some day, perhaps, but not yet, the clergy will come to realize that the laity merely tolerate Anglo-Catholicism and, like the non-church-folk of the nation, will never accept it; while its real devotees will gravitate more and more towards the logical conclusion of their thought and ways—the Church of Rome.

Meanwhile it is this prevailing religious condition of our country and Church which makes Establishment in theory difficult to defend, which also makes it in reality so valuable. It is Establishment which has kept our Church as wide as the nation, in the sense that the main forms Christianity has taken can and do find a home within, as well as outside, our Church. The vitally important thing is, not necessarily that the Church of England, but that Christianity should be nationally Established.

We can never claim convincingly that Christianity is a unifying force so long as it is itself so divided. The grounds of division between the Roman Catholic and other Churches are obvious, intelligible, and unbridgable. The differences between the main

[5] *Science, Religion and the Future*, pp. 77*f*. (Cambridge University Press.)

non-Roman Churches in this country are no longer so. The parlous position of institutional religion in itself makes union between these Churches a matter of grave urgency. If it could be effected, national Establishment with every reasonable degree of freedom could be concurrently accomplished.

Two facts are beyond doubt: (*a*) that, of those who are at all interested, a large body of the clergy and the overwhelming majority of the laity, churchgoers and others, would rejoice to see this union, and believe it could easily be achieved if it were really desired, and (*b*) that the one fatal obstacle is not episcopacy but *a doctrine of episcopacy*, historically and theologically dubious, which possibly a majority of the clergy and nearly all the laity do not and will never believe; all but a fraction of the people agreeing with Selden: that they are equally mad who say bishops are so *jure divino* that they must be continued, and who say that they are so anti-Christian that they must be put away.

No liberal Christians, and few others, wish to exclude Anglo-Catholics from their fellowship; but it is fatal to allow their threats of self-exclusion to hold up every policy, no matter how urgent or widely-desired, towards which their attitude is a *non possumus*. History has declared against the idea that the only unity is structural; it is not a New Testament ideal; yet we go on sacrificing the living unity which is possible to an ideal of uniformity which is not possible.

Meanwhile, again, the attitude of the State to religion and to our own Church remains, as it has long been, neither hostile nor indifferent, but benevolent and friendly. To suggest the contrary is foolish and false. Negatively, the State does not interfere or insist upon a rigid adherence to accepted formularies. Positively, the Archbishops and Free Church leaders in 1941 asked the Government to do five things in the vexed question of religious education.[6] These requests have been conceded. Similarly, the B.B.C., to which the State accords a monopoly, allows the most explicit, religious, though not sectarian, propaganda, but does not permit direct replies from anti-religious societies. The paralysis of the Church of England is due, not to her legal relation to the State or to any consequences thereof, but to her internal divisions, re-

[6] They were (*a*) that there should be in every school teachers able and willing to instruct in religious knowledge; (*b*) provide that religious knowledge be an optional subject in training colleges and in the examination for the teachers' certificate; (*c*) secure daily united worship in schools; (*d*) provide, wherever acceptable, syllabuses of Christian education or text-books prepared by a representative body for use in schools; (*e*) authorize H.M. Inspectors to inspect this subject if so desired by the L.E.A. or by the school governors or managers. See the article by Sir Cyril Norwood in the *Modern Churchman*, June, 1943.

actionary teaching and practice, and to the very serious decline in the intellectual status of so many of the clergy.

Nor need the idea of Establishment be repugnant to modern Free Churchmen. It was not so to the Cromwellian Independents, or to Presbyterians from the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries, nor is it so to the Church of Scotland to-day. The repugnance felt against Establishment is due to a wrong conception of Nation and State which has in some circles usurped the right one. Charles Smyth is not alone in finding contemporary Anglican theology deficient in its doctrine of the State. Even Dr. Temple, who generally writes with care in such matters, allows himself to say he believes it good for the State to be affiliated to *the* Divine Society.[7] Is not the Nation also a Divine Society? Is any Church Militant here in earth only or wholly a Divine Society? The feeling—it is rarely a coherent doctrine—that the State is essentially and only secular is both erroneous and detrimental. The State, as Creighton said, is the necessary organ of the nation; but so is the Church, for its purpose is to keep alive and educate into increasing sensitiveness that sense of righteousness which alone exalteth a nation. Neither Church nor State must coerce the consciences of its people, but the idea that the State should be stripped of all responsibility for the religious and moral life of the nation is in practice impossible, and anyhow all wrong. It can only degrade the conception of the State. Thoughtless and wild talk about freeing the Church from bondage to the State, as though the State were something unholy, stifling to the spiritual life of man, something from which the high-minded man longs to be delivered, debases the true ideal of the State.

The Church must choose between the illusory interests of institutional independence and the infinitely more important interests of her work. If we would but seek in the circumstances our history has bequeathed to us not hindrances but opportunities; if Christian people would make it a test both of Church and State that they find room for all that is good in the desires and aspirations of the nation, and express and develop them; and learn to look at ecclesiastical issues from the standpoint of the religious welfare *of the nation*,—then the union of the non-Roman Churches in this land would soon be accomplished, and the Church re-established in the life of the nation as otherwise neither it nor Christianity ever will be. The prospects are not bright; zeal is often and more easily aroused by folly than by wisdom; and the time of grace may be short.

[7] *Christianity and the State*, p. 196. Italics mine.

THE NATIONAL CHURCH AND EDUCATION

By the Rev. L. B. Cross, M.A., Fellow of Jesus College, Oxford.

'TO be tiresome, it has been said, it is only necessary to discuss education. Is there a subject on which men are more apt to be tedious?' With these words the late T. R. Glover opens the last chapter of his book *Cambridge Retrospect*. They are a timely warning to me, indeed to all of us, but quite apart from the fact that I was asked to introduce this subject, the appearance of the Government's proposals for the reform of publicly provided education in England and Wales compels our attention. To attempt a general discussion of these proposals would be outside the scope of this paper; besides, that would seem unnecessary, since there has already been so much discussion while they were yet secret and confidential! Unlike a Budget, the White Paper contains no surprises. On the whole, its proposals are sane, generous, encouraging, and express the unanimous aspirations of all sections of the community. It would seem that they will go forward as the new 1943 Education Act with very little opposition; even the most voluble and vicious critics will find it hard to discover in them sufficient of their favourite political garbage to sling at the Prime Minister. Criticism no doubt there will be, but, in the words of the President of the Board of Education, 'every effort should be made to subordinate private or sectional prejudices and predilections to the interests of the children.'

From the National Church there should be no criticisms, for the proposals put forward in the White Paper embody the five points of the Archbishops' *call to action*, together with the main demands of the National Society, and those of all other religious societies, committees and bodies—and they are many—interested in the preservation of the Dual System. The Church has won, at any rate for itself, what appears to be a striking strategic victory: whether this initial success is developed into a major spiritual victory remains to be seen. As the White Paper points out, 'legislation can do little more than prepare the way for reform.' The advantages so far gained are in themselves largely material and financial, and they are also only potential; the few changes contemplated are legislative and administrative. The Dual System remains, though it seems to have expanded itself into a quadruple system, for in future there are to be besides Provided schools, Local Agreement schools, Aided schools, and Controlled schools.

Personally, I deeply regret, and I fear we shall all live to regret, the preservation of the Dual System: it does not seem to have served any good purpose in the past, at best it was a compromise, and in the new scheme of things it survives as an anomaly, to the average person, like any other piece of Victorian furniture, having little more than sentimental interest. I cannot help thinking that, taking the long view, it would be wise for the Church, even at this late hour, to hand over to the care and management of the State, free, gratis and for nothing, what in the past has been, and to a large extent still must be, a wasting asset. This would at any rate be a gracious gesture, and would undoubtedly inspire in the nation confidence in the Church's sincere determination to put prejudice and vested interest on one side and help in the building up of a real spiritual rather than ecclesiastical heritage. If the Church is to make any appreciable contribution to our national spiritual heritage it must make it through the whole scheme of education, not in the narrow field of its own sectarian teaching and administration. Here, I should have thought, was a great spiritual opportunity.

The victory, if indeed the preservation of the Dual System can rightly be called a victory, has grave attendant risks. The preservation of the Dual System will almost certainly tend to perpetuate disunion among the Churches of this country by encouraging in the minds of children the sectarian spirit. Could anything be more conducive to this than the periodical withdrawal of Anglicans for religious instruction to one part of a building, of Baptists to another, of Methodists to a third, leaving a miscellaneous deposit of outcasts to feed on the flavourless fare of an agreed syllabus, while one or two others, whose parents object to religious instruction of any kind, retire, probably not too gracefully, into the She-ol of secular studies? This does not seem to me to be the ideal way of conducting religious education, or of laying the spiritual foundations of future generations, but it is going to happen of necessity in some of the Non-Provided schools. The first and most lasting lesson some children will learn from religious instruction will be that of 'division among the brethren,' and they will find it hard to see why these things should be. Now that religious instruction is to be given in all schools, primary and secondary, there would seem to me to be no possible excuse for preserving the Dual System, excepting in order to preserve sectarianism.

One can hardly imagine that those responsible for the White Paper think the preservation of the Dual System ideal. They are not prepared to sponsor denominational teaching in Provided schools; why should they encourage it in others? Did they fear that the storm which might break upon them from the Churches,

and in particular from the National Church, would wreck the whole scheme of religious education? To quote the White Paper:

> 'It is clear that the solution of the problem cannot ignore the principle that the State, though concerned to ensure a sound religious basis for all education, cannot take on itself the full responsibility for fostering the teaching of formularies distinctive of particular denominations.'

Are we to see in these words a warning of disestablishment, the State refusing to foster the teaching of the formularies of its own National Church? Is that to be the price ultimately paid for the preservation of the Dual System? At any rate it would appear that only with the Churches has the Government been forced to compromise, to accept something less than the best.

Despite this official disclaimer, the evils of sectarianism will nevertheless cut deeply, very deeply, into the religious education of Provided schools, both primary and secondary, as well as into that of Non-Provided schools. Here the basis of religious instruction is to be an agreed syllabus, steps are to be taken to provide competent teachers, the subject is to be inspected along with other subjects, the present rigid time-table is to be made more elastic so that religious instruction can be given at any period of the day, and the school is to open daily with prayers. All this is very excellent in itself, and would seem to make possible a great spiritual improvement in our whole educational atmosphere. But is this going to be frustrated by an ultimate sectarianism? Are the children of Provided schools to be brought up 'free church,' or even 'free thinking,' as contrasted with those given denominational instruction in other schools? The contrast between the two will not only be marked, it will be official.

Again, is it possible to teach the Scriptures, even to an agreed syllabus, without sectarianism creeping in? The reports of certain Church committees, and the recommendations of certain agreed syllabuses think this is so, but their special pleading in many cases serves only to strengthen doubt. After all, the teachings of the various sects claim to be based on their own particular interpretation of the Scriptures, and the continued existence of these sects, together with the official recognition of them as separate units within the whole scheme of religious education, will undoubtedly encourage discrimination and thereby disunion.

But there is a further and more potent disruptive element likely to creep into the teaching of religion in Provided schools. The very prejudices which gave rise to the Dual System are unlikely to keep within their own bounds; they will assuredly seek to find new pastures. The teaching of Scripture, like the teaching of any other subject, will without doubt be coloured by the predilections and prejudices of those who teach it. Assuming that every Pro-

vided school has an adequate supply of duly qualified Scripture teachers, and I am certain that within the next thirty years the scholastic market will be flooded with them, especially if the various Churches take the obvious step of increasing the number of men and women training in their denominational Training Colleges, what will be the result? Will it not be conscious or unconscious proselytizing, and the preservation of those unhappy divisions in which some of the leaders of our Churches seem to take so great a delight? That these sectarian rivalries are likely to develop in Provided schools is, I think, shown by the tremendous increase in class and political prejudice which has grown up out of the teaching of history even by seemingly unprejudiced teachers during the past thirty years or so. The majority of children in our primary and secondary schools are now instructed in the principles of labour, socialism or communism, a small minority in those of liberalism, and an infinitesimal few in those of toryism. Are our Provided schools, like the Non-Provided schools, going to be known in future by their allegiance to Rome, to the Church of England, to Baptists, to Presbyterians? We and our fathers may have eaten sour grapes, but I see no reason why we should set the children's teeth on edge.

The real danger for the future as far as religious education is concerned lies in the lack of unity among the Churches. Until Reunion has been effected, until the Churches speak one common language, have one common belief, and form one common brotherhood of Christians, no spiritual foundations can be laid for our national life. Religious education will continuously be frustrated. Reunion has always been a vital issue in the minds of Modern Churchmen; in the light of these new proposals for a universal religious education, it is more vital than ever. A determined effort on the part of the National Church to unite with the Free Churches would be the greatest contribution it could make not only to the cause of religious education both in and out of the schools, but to that of national unity and spiritual growth in general. A good first step in this direction would be the surrender of its schools, for it is there, I am sure, that the old doctrinal differences and prejudices are going to be perpetuated afresh.

Failing Reunion and the abolition of Church schools, the only way in which some of the dangers I have mentioned can possibly be guarded against is for the State to exercise careful and watchful control against proselytizing. If the State is sincere, and I believe it is, in its desire 'that religion should be given a more defined place in the life and work of the schools,' and is not merely pandering to sentiment and war emotionalism, it should not rest satisfied until the subject is properly taught and adequately pro-

vided for, indeed, until it becomes a subject of major importance in the school curriculum. With this end in view, religious instruction should not be just 'included among the subjects' in which a student can obtain a pass in the teachers' certificate examination; it should be made compulsory, so that, making due allowance for conscience, the maximum number of any one staff would be able to teach it. This would at any rate secure that the monopoly of the subject in any school does not get into the hands of any one person and thereby of any one denomination. The psychological effect of all the staff giving religious instruction would be of the greatest importance in unifying and providing a spiritual basis for the whole life of the school. The provision of religious instruction in all schools is the greatest, and yet potentially the most dangerous step forward ever taken in modern educational reform. Is it too much to ask both the State and the Churches to take every possible precaution to ensure its success? Religious education should certainly not be left to run itself, for it will certainly run amuck.

Whether the reforms proposed in the White Paper are a failure or a success depends eventually upon the teachers. Here nothing but the very best material will suffice, and especially in view of the far-reaching and revolutionary recommendations contained in the recently published report of the Norwood Committee, which make greatly increased demands both upon the responsibility of the teachers, and also upon their initiative and integrity. Can we trust the teacher? We must; but we must also see that only picked men and women from our universities and training colleges are allowed to teach, and that after a much longer and more thorough training than most of them now receive. Though in the past, and at present, very many have served and are serving their day and generation well, and we should be thankful to them for their courage, devotion, self-sacrifice and vision, there are still many in the profession who are mere time-servers with little interest in anything beyond the financial and influential value of the positions they occupy. The teacher's task is a pastoral one; he stands in place of the parents, his charge is over the nation's children. His care should be not the minds only (how often even this is not realized), but the souls and bodies of his pupils also. His task is never done. His office is every whit as sacred and as important as that of the clergy. And yet, that trainees for the sacred ministry of teaching should have a vocation for that work seems seldom to occur to many.

The failure of our present educational system is not, however, primarily the fault of the teachers; they have been up against many forces over which they could have no control. The competitive struggle for existence has debased our Christian standards and

commercialized its values. There has been a traffic in knowledge as in everything else; education is considered good or bad just in so far as it helps in the attainment of a high salaried post. Even our universities are places of sound learning, of spiritual and intellectual influences, only for the few; for the vast majority they are commercial centres where knowledge can be bought and sold again to the highest bidder. Degrees have ceased to represent the 'grace' of a university; no longer even do they guarantee high standards of intellectual, moral or spiritual attainment. They are too often just passports to commercial or social opportunity.

The poor student of the Middle Ages with his interest in scholarship for its own sake has almost disappeared, and his place has been taken by the well-to-do scholar, and the adequately provided for commoner or exhibitioner, whose intellectual freedom and spiritual capacity are too often cramped by social, professional, political or ecclesiastical prejudices, or by individual vested interests. Even the colleges share these prejudices and vested interests; there is keen competition for the good scholar as an investment; in the eyes of many he has a commercial value, for he enhances the reputation of a college as a place where men get good classes. Character may be considered, but so-called scholarship is the main criterion of choice when elections are made. And the teaching of undergraduates in many cases is equally commercialized. Only to the few is that teaching both an inspiration and inspiring. To many it is just a means of livelihood, a necessary evil attached to a post which might be otherwise and more pleasantly enjoyed. How few of those responsible for the teaching at our universities show any real, any spiritual interest in the lives of the men they teach; how few seem to realize that theirs is the sacred commission of training men for life rather than for a degree; how few gain their pupils' confidence; how few give freely of their personality that their pupils may in turn give freely of theirs. The whole tendency of education to-day, both higher and lower, is towards the creation of a vicious circle of men and women going from home to school, from school to a university, only to return to teach again to successive generations the dull routine of examination clichés which they in their turn have learnt, and all the while there is the distant jingle of hard cash.

Education starts in the home, but parents have long since thrown their responsibility on to the State. The home has ceased to be the centre either of intellectual, cultural or spiritual influences. In many cases it has long since ceased to be the centre of love, or even of decent standards of behaviour or morality. The Christian home is fast becoming a thing of the past; its place is taken by the house in which some people live together, and not

always under ideal conditions or relationships. Its substitute, the school, is too often the place where children are trained for examinations, and where facts of knowledge, or rather knowledge of facts, are accumulated for that purpose. Can we wonder at the breakdown of our educational system? For many of these things the National Church must share the blame, if only by its default in not securing the survival of Christian values. Against this dark background the White Paper, and the report of the Norwood Committee give us a vision of things worthwhile to come, but the task ahead is tremendous.

What part is the Church going to play in this scheme of things? While it retains its present character it can perforce have little real influence in primary and secondary education outside its own schools. If it wishes to extend its influence, and play the part it should play in co-operation with the State, thus making full use of the unprecedented spiritual opportunities afforded it at this time, it must first face up to the realities of the situation and introduce into its own organization reforms similar to those proposed in the White Paper. The National Church is suffering from just those evils from which our present educational system suffers. I am emboldened to think that a Government White Paper, a Norwood Report and a McNair Committee on the National Church, its organization and purpose, might have a not unsalutary effect!

The Church has largely forgotten its true function and neglected its primary charge. It started as a teaching community, setting up new standards of value for all men, standards relating to the age and environment in which they lived, but nevertheless divine standards. That is true education, to bring all nature and all human activity within the divine perspective. That is the real work of the Church. At present it is far too much obsessed with its own exclusive sacramentalism to realize how far its has fallen from its first great ideals. Sacramentalism has its place in religion as in life, and it is a very important place, but it should not be exclusive to ecclesiastical orders and buildings. There is the wider sacramentalism of nature, of human activity, of the child's life. True education and true sacramentalism are the same things, namely, the teaching of God's children to recognize truth, beauty and goodness wherever they are to be found, to search for them, and to make them their own.

For education the Church to-day has substituted propaganda, propaganda to bolster up a largely outworn theology and meaningless dogma. The best theological scholarship is either wholly ignored or prostituted as the handmaid of casuistry. Few books of intellectual or spiritual worth have made their appearance during the past decade, but of the outpourings of religious sentimentalism

and sensationalism there is no end. Even the life of Jesus has recently been melodramatized and dogmatized by a writer of detective fiction with the sureness of touch which only a profound ignorance of both theology and contemporary history could possibly produce. The Jesus of the Gospels has been made the leading figure of religious pantomime, his friends and foes alike expressions of theological traditions whose threadbare trappings are hardly respectable. This and other examples of modern religious drama may be all right for the purposes for which drama was intended, but they should not be allowed to pose as representing anything more than theological fantasia. It would seem that in these days of crisis, as in those of Isaiah, the Churches are turning for support to 'them that have familiar spirits, and unto wizards, that chirp and that mutter.' Propaganda, especially this kind of propaganda which plays largely upon ignorance and the emotions, can never be a substitute for the Church's true mission, that of teaching a relevant, intelligible and integrated Gospel.

In his recent article on 'The Immediate Issue of Religious Education,'[1] our President has suggested four ways in which the Church can and should begin to revive its ancient teaching mission. First, by the provision of more training colleges free from any seminary spirit, modern in outlook, and associated wherever possible with universities. Secondly, by the provision of short courses to help those teachers who desire to take their work seriously and are concerned over their own inadequacy. Thirdly, by the improvement of Sunday schools, and the provision of adult education classes and groups for reading and discussion. Fourthly, by the provision of suitable text-books at the secondary school stage. All these suggestions are as practicable as they are practical, and no time should be lost in putting them into effect. There are two other ways in which the Church can revive its educational prestige and influence, and at the same time make an invaluable contribution to present-day educational reconstruction.

I have already suggested that the Christian home is fast becoming a thing of the past. Many circumstances have contributed to this; not the least of these is the Church's failure during the past half-century to maintain an intimate relationship with the family. I know that most modern parishes are organized on the card-index system, but they seldom get far beyond the system, and, after all, it is personal contact and direct sympathy, not office efficiency, which in the long run count. The magnification of the altar has led to the neglect of the hearth. The present-day incumbent, especially in our large cities and in the suburbs, is far too much the imitation of the business man. He has ceased to be the

[1] *The Modern Churchman*, June, 1943.

true pastor. He sees his people in his office at specified times and only when they come to him, at communal gatherings and in church. He seldom visits, excepting in cases of sickness; he does not know the homes or the home life.

And yet, for all children and young people, the home must always remain the one permanent centre of influence for good or evil. Whatever spiritual foundations may have been laid at school or elsewhere depend for their continued existence on the home influence. Out-of-school contacts are, if anything, more important and influential than in-school ones, for it is by such contacts that the child and young person pick up a vast store of undirected knowledge and experience, including, unfortunately, in most cases sex knowledge. If the Church will look after and Christianize the homes of England and its society in general, it will be playing a very great part in educational reconstruction.

But this important work can only be done if the Church has the right kind of men to do it, and this is my second point. It is because these are lacking that the work has not been done. There can be no doubt that during the past half-century the personnel of the ministry has changed both in type, ability and outlook. No longer is the Church drawing its ordinands from the universities as a whole, though the supply from this source is still kept up to a certain extent by a few seminary-like colleges. The best men do not consider even the possibility that the Church has any claim on their allegiance or lives; and yet most of them are desperately serious in their outlook on life and jealous for many of those things for which the Christian Gospel stands, and many play their part, a very great part, in the educational, social and administrative services of the country and Empire. They are all educationalists in their various ways, but it seldom dawns on them that the Church has any educational function beyond that of teaching the Scriptures. These men must be shown the true educational and social nature of the Church's work. The Church must divert them into its ranks, or perish.

To this need the Church would seem to be alive. The recently issued Interim Report of the Archbishops' Commission on Training for the Ministry has two main recommendations to make: first, that Regional Committees should ultimately be responsible for the choice of candidates; secondly, that theological colleges be moved to the vicinity of university centres. Personally, I am not very hopeful that these selection committees will be of any great service; it is a different type of man to select from, not a different method of selection, which is needed. This different type will only be obtained when the Church breaks free from the encrustations of the past, and when the few partisan ecclesiastical politicians

who at present direct its councils, its practice and its policy are superseded by men of forward, not backward, vision, and of sound practical common sense. Reading the chronicles of Convocation and the Church Assembly is like reading a nurseryman's catalogue; everything is Douglasii, Johnsoni or Quickswoodii. The 'pit to pulpit' type of ordinand is all right in moderation, but suffers from the same drawbacks as other types when they become too numerous, and so far the Church has not succeeded in sufficiently educating this type to be worthy either of the pulpit or of its pastoral work.

Nor can I think that the removal of theological colleges to the vicinity of a university is in itself going to effect any worthwhile change. Here again the reverse process is necessary; the Church must attract good men from the universities, not introduce mediocre ones into them. On the other hand, if the removal of theological colleges to the universities would enable their inhabitants to be taught the truth as well as the faith, then by all means let this be done.

The success of the Church's educational efforts, like those of the schools, depends ultimately simply and solely upon the quality of its teachers and what they teach. Our National Church, like our National schools, should be satisfied only with the best, for in many ways the Church's task is far greater than that of the schools; it is certainly more protracted and has greater variety. Education, as the White Paper rightly emphasizes, is a continuous process, from the Church's point of view, from the cradle to the grave. At every stage of life man needs careful nurturing; his mind and soul as well as his body need constant direction and refreshment. No greater testimony could be paid to any man than that inscribed on the tombstone of the great English historian, J. R. Green, 'He died learning.' Education before and after schooldays, as well as during them, is the Church's main responsibility and privilege; it must cover the whole field of human activity, and must consist not merely in handing on certain facts of history, creeds, dogmas, traditions and practices, but in training men to see and measure all life, biological, social, political and intellectual in the light of its eternal significance.

THE PARSON AS POLITICIAN AND ECONOMIST

By the Reverend Gamaliel Milner, M.A., author of *The Problem of Decadence*, etc., Werrington Vicarage, Launceston, Cornwall.

CLARENDON, the most Anglican of historians, says in his *Life* that the clergy understand the least and take the worst measure of human affairs of all mankind that can write and read. He probably expressed the opinion of the average layman, who thinks the clergy know nothing of business and had better keep out of politics. The judgment, however, is, surely, too sweeping. Clarendon's contemporary, Cardinal Richelieu, inaugurated the *Grand Siècle*, which a mistaken posterity has called the Age of Louis XIV. Napoleon found Talléyrand a first-rate Foreign Secretary, though a trifle expensive; when he parted with the *ci-devant* Bishop of Autun, he parted at the same time with his good fortune. Joseph Stalin was educated for the priesthood; and as Gibbon said that the Captain of the Hampshire Militia had not been useless to the historian of the Roman Empire, so we may flatter ourselves that the student at the Tiflis Theological College has not been useless to the Premier of the U.S.S.R.

> 'How small of all that human hearts endure
> That part which kings or laws can cause or cure.'

So wrote Dr. Johnson in the eighteenth century, and those of us who remember the specious days of great Victoria can understand what he meant. August Bank Holiday, 1914, closed that age of gilt-edged security. We are reminded of the political situation every time we sit down to a meal or try to buy a pair of socks. It is no use putting wax into the ears when the voice of the modern Sirens is heard. The advice to pedestrians, *Nisi monumentum requiris, circumspice*, 'unless you want a tombstone, keep your eyes open,' is only too applicable to the men of this generation. The Greek word ἰδιώτης (*idiotes*), 'a man who takes no interest in politics,' is the origin of our word 'idiot.'

The Christian Church began with an almost pathetic determination to make the best of the Roman Empire. When one remembers that it was a Roman magistrate who sentenced our Lord to a shameful death, that it was Roman soldiers that platted the Crown of Thorns, the language of St. Paul about the administration of justice sounds strangely favourable. The whitewashing of Pilate went so far that the Abyssinian Church has actually made

him a saint. A court intrigue — Poppaea, Nero's wife, had something to do with it — led to the punishment of the Christians as incendiaries and the branding of Christianity as an illegal religion. The repressed anger of the Church broke out in that decidedly Left Wing publication, the *Apocalypse of St. John*, which may or may not have been written by the Beloved Disciple. In spite of this outbreak the Apologists kept assuring the Emperors that the persecution was all a dreadful mistake, and that the Christians were thoroughly loyal and contented subjects. The Pagans, however, continued instinctively to look askance at that strange phenomenon, the Christian Church. It was a new thing, an association founded not on common race or local contiguity, but on common beliefs. It was the First International.

The revolutionary element which certainly existed below the surface in the Christian movement was kept in check by the general persuasion that the end of all things was at hand. Why agitate for a New Order when the world was soon to be involved in a universal *Blitz*? Lazarus and Dives would soon change places without any need for a social convulsion. Lecky, the respectable Victorian, thought it was a point in favour of the Methodist movement that it saved England from an upheaval like the French Revolution; Lenin, looking at things from a diametrically opposite standpoint, said that religion was the opium of the people. Eventually Constantine came to an arrangement with the Church, which was, so to speak, bound over to keep the peace. One of the great questions of history which people will continue to answer according to their prepossessions, is whether, as Matthew Arnold held, Constantine saved the Church from being an underworld movement and a dissenting sect, or whether the unbaptized layman who presided at the Council of Nicaea was the Mussolini of the fourth century.

Whether Christianity contributed to the destruction of ancient civilization or not is another of those points which are still litigating among the learned. It seems certain that it did little to save it. No great measure of social reform was carried through; the Church failed to inspire the inhabitants of the Roman Empire with any heroic determination to resist the invader, even when the barbarian was a heathen or a heretic. This is worth remembering nowadays when ecclesiastics are trying to recommend Christianity as a panacea for saving our civilization. It is doubtful if the monks and hermits of the fifth century were very anxious to save civilization.

What did eventually shake Christianity out of its preoccupation with the next world was the challenge of Islam. For in remote Arabia there arose a rival Church, the Second International, the

Community of the True Believers. The new Church was in almost every respect the inferior of the old, but it had one great advantage, it was a fighting Church. It swept Christianity out of existence in North Africa; the armed missionaries of Mahomet got to Tours. Had the battle there gone the other way, we might now be meeting in the precincts of a mosque.

It would take us far too long to try to describe that magnificent experiment, Mediaeval Europe. It was far from being a Utopia. One of the greatest of clerical statesmen, Innocent III, in his decree establishing the Inquisition, speaks of the age as tottering to its dissolution, infected with the foul canker of old age. *Hora novissima, tempora pessima*, says the mediaeval hymn of Bernard of Morlaix, translated in Hymns Ancient and Modern, 'The world is very evil, the times are waxing late.' Looked at coolly, the Middle Ages, 1000 to 1500, was a period of economic advance. The population increased, slowly by modern standards; it may have doubled in five hundred years. Direct checks, as Malthus called them, kept it down, famines, pestilence, war which was endemic though on a small scale. The serf, who at the beginning of the period was little better than a slave attached to the land, gradually acquired customary rights which made him in favoured localities something like a peasant proprietor.

The Church acquiesced in the inevitability of gradualness. It accepted the Feudal System and tried with fair success to make the best of it. Social revolutionaries were heretics; they could be tried by Church Courts and handed over to the secular arm. Communists could go into monasteries, which, however, came to hold in their corporate capacity a great part of the land. St. Francis and his followers were more difficult to assimilate; there was a minority movement which had to be liquidated.

What was the Reformation in terms of politics and economics? The nineteenth century view was that it marked a stage in the march of Liberalism. Writers in the twentieth century, Roman Catholics like Mr. Belloc, Socialists like Mr. Tawney, have popularized the idea that it was a step back to Paganism, to the Servile State and the Acquisitive Society. Anyhow, it meant a revolt of Man against Clergyman; the Parson was to keep out of politics. What exasperated the Squires against Charles I was not so much the alleged Romish leanings of Laud as the fact that the Archbishop was a leading member of the Government, another Bishop at the Treasury, and a third Lord Keeper; it seemed things were going back to the bad old times of Wolsey.

With the discovery of America and the rounding of the Cape of Good Hope Christendom expanded physically and intellectually and became less Christian. It was not till the Victorian Age

that a neo-pagan poet sang:

> 'Glory to man in the highest,
> For man is the master of things.'

But the thought was not absent from the minds of the Humanists of the *Renaissance*. Not that they wished to get rid of God altogether, there were too many unexplained mysteries in the world for that; but religion should be kept out of public, if not of private life. Incidentally the Church might be relieved of some of her superfluous wealth.

The Enlightenment of the Voltairean period was the *Renaissance* Humanism turned sour. One of the precursors of the French Revolution expressed a wish to strangle the last king with the entrails of the last priest; it was significant that the priest was to die first. The Revolution threw the Church — some might prefer to say it found the Church — everywhere on the side of the established order. Whether it was the Clergy or the Revolutionaries who were responsible for the struggle is a matter of controversy. An anti-clerical who heard that a certain prelate had been bitten by a dog said, 'I'll warrant the Bishop began the quarrel.' Anyhow, the Bishops supported the war against Revolutionary and Atheist France; they prayed for peace in the Lord's House and voted for war in the House of Lords. The mob at Birmingham who, under the influence of drink and religious enthusiasm, burnt down the house of Dr. Priestley for celebrating the fall of the Bastille, huzzaed for Church and King. A tradition was established which has lasted almost, if not quite, to our own time. The general atmosphere of the Anglican Church and its headquarters, the University of Oxford, was unmistakeably Tory. Newman on the fateful voyage to the Mediterranean, during which he wrote his well-known hymn, 'Lead, kindly light,' saw a French warship at Algiers. 'I would not even look at the *Tricolor*,' he says. Long after in his *Apology*, written in 1864, he expresses his astonishment that the well-known French preacher, Lacordaire, was a Liberal in politics.

The record of the Christian Church during the last hundred years does not seem very impressive. Looked at corporately, it would seem that the Church has only intervened in politics where its own interests are concerned. The prospect of disestablishment, a threat to Church schools, a Public Worship Act, a Prayer Book Revision Measure, will flutter the ecclesiastical dovecotes, but when important issues are at stake involving the happiness of millions, not a wing stirs. It should be said at once that this is not the whole story. The incalculable service which the Church — I do not mean the Church of England only — has rendered in this and other countries in relieving distress, ministering to sickness,

promoting education, maintaining civilized standards of life, is left out of the picture in our secular and even in our Church histories. That many of these activities have in recent years been taken over by the State should not make us forget the quiet, unpretentious service rendered not only by the clergy but by millions of laymen and laywomen belonging to different religious organizations.

Yet we must face the fact, however unpalatable it may be, that any approach we may make as a Church to the class-conscious section of the workers is likely to be received with suspicion. Labour will receive the belated advances of our bishops much as Dr. Johnson did those of Lord Chesterfield.

> 'Is a patron, my Lord, one who looks with unconcern on a man struggling for life in the water, and, when he has reached ground, encumbers him with help? The notice which you have been pleased to take of us, had it been earlier, had been kind. We hope it is no very cynical asperity not to confess obligations where no benefit has been received, or to be unwilling that the public should consider us as owing that to a Patron which Providence has enabled us to do for ourselves.'

Happily for itself, the Church of England has always been a very undisciplined body. There were Liberal Churchmen in the early part of the nineteenth century, and they were to be found almost entirely among Broad Churchmen; the spiritual ancestors of the Anglo-Catholics, the Tractarians, were Tories. I make that statement without prejudice, as the lawyers say, simply as a historical fact. Arnold of Rugby, writing to Bunsen in 1833, makes his own standpoint very clear:

> 'I feel that, of the two besetting sins of human nature, selfish neglect and selfish agitation, the former is the more common, and has in the long run done far more harm than the latter, although the outbreaks of the latter while they last are of a far more atrocious character; so I have in a manner vowed to myself, and prayed that, with God's blessing, no excesses of popular wickedness, though I should be myself, as I expect, the victim of them, shall ever make me forget the wickedness of Toryism — of that spirit which crucified Christ Himself, which has throughout the long experience of all history continually thwarted the cause of God and goodness, and has gone on abusing its opportunities and heaping up wrath by a long series of selfish neglect against the day of wrath and judgment.'

So wrote Dr. Arnold, whom some hold to have been the begetter of the Public School Spirit, the patentee of the Old School Tie. Thomas Hughes and Charles Kingsley were his disciples; it was the Arnoldians who brought to the front what was called the Condition of England question, who got a hearing for Carlyle, the early Carlyle who makes his prototype give the toast, 'The Cause of the Poor in God's name and the Devil's.' The Christian Socialism of Maurice may seem small beer in our day; it was regarded as dangerously intoxicating in his own.

It would be grossly unjust to think of the struggle between Whig and Tory as a conflict between light and darkness. Exaggeration was as much a failing of the early Victorians as of the present generation, and Dr. Arnold was greatly addicted to it. Lord Shaftesbury was a Tory, so were most of the pioneers of Factory Legislation. I have thought it as well, however, to draw attention to the fact that during most of the nineteenth century, and down to the days of the Rev. Charles Jenkinson, political and theological Liberalism usually go together. Anglo-Catholics nowadays claim to be in a very special sense the friends of the workers, and represent us as reactionaries. Yet it is not so long ago that they were celebrating the centenary of Keble's Sermon on National Apostasy. What specially roused Keble's ire was a proposed diversion of part of the incomes of the Irish bishops to what we should now call social services. Samuel Wilberforce, the hero of *Lawn Sleeves*, has the honour, if it be one, of having detached the Church from the Tory party. He got his fellow-bishops to take up a cross-bench attitude, to sit more or less gracefully on the fence. I do not think that we Modernists are more reactionary, more right-minded shall we say, than our fellow-Churchmen; we do not deserve the compliment, or (alternatively) plead guilty to the imputation. On one point we shall probably concur, we don't want an agreed policy for the whole Church. Some of us may be Socialists in theory; we are all, I think, individualists in practice.

Now that it is over, and the Victorians consigned to their whited sepulchres, we may admit that the nineteenth century was a marvellous, perhaps a unique period in history. The population of Europe, stationary during the Dark Ages, increasing very slowly in mediaeval times, suddenly jumped up from 170 to 550 millions in less than a century and a half. The white race occupied most of the temperate zone, and reduced to political and economic dependence most of the tropics. Unhappily the age also produced the conflict of science and religion. The phrase has, I am aware, an old-fashioned sound. Many people suppose that for everybody except a few benighted fundamentalists and old-fashioned rationalists the strife is o'er, the battle done, though no one seems to know who won. Scientists and clergymen no longer call each other names; we are all in the same boat, and pretty seasick. But the conflict between the teaching of science and the precepts of religion is far more acute to-day than it was in the days of Huxley and Gladstone. Adolf Hitler is the exponent of the struggle for existence and the survival of the fittest.

Alas! The first man who raised the issue was the Rev. Thomas Robert Malthus, 'Parson Malthus,' Cobbett was fond of calling him. He was a Fellow of Jesus College, Cambridge. His father,

a gentleman of property in Surrey, was unhappily infected by the fashionable French philosophy with the belief that a golden age of virtue and happiness was approaching; *Human Perfectibility* by Condorcet was his special oracle; Condorcet got the idea from Rousseau, who probably owed it to memories of the Garden of Eden as described in Calvinistic Geneva. Young Malthus was naturally anxious to reclaim his parent from his Frenchified notions. In after-dinner discussions he propounded the view that the human race always tends to increase more rapidly than the means of subsistence. He elaborated his thesis in his *Essay on Population*, which subsequently swelled into a monumental work enriched by a great array of statistics.

Parson Malthus was the object of a good deal of abuse from sentimentalists. After his death his name was associated with the birth-control propaganda set on foot by Charles Bradlaugh and Mrs. Besant; Malthus, by the way, only once alluded to birth-control, and then in terms of unsparing condemnation. The Capitalists and their literary henchmen, the Manchester School, welcomed his teaching. The hard lot of the labouring classes was nobody's fault; it was the result of an iron law. Inevitably the pressure of increasing population caught up with the process of improvement. The poor have ye always with you. Perhaps a future state, where there will be neither marrying nor giving in marriage, may redress the balance.

Charles Darwin and Alfred Russell Wallace found in *Malthus on Population* a clue to what the former calls the Mystery of Mysteries, the origin of species. They had seen the struggle for existence in the forests of Malaysia and South America. So far from there being enough for all, it is only the exceptionally lucky organism that survives. To adopt what the Malvern Report calls the facile anthropomorphism of the Barnes-Major school, God does not provide for the young raven his food, He only provides food for about 10 per cent. of the young ravens. It is not necessary to point out how violently all this conflicts with the semi-Christian Humanitarianism in vogue at the present day. That is one of the problems which awaits us at the end of the war. How are we to persuade the German people that they have no right to the living-room which the existent eighty millions and the potential two hundred and fifty millions budgeted for in *Mein Kampf* desiderate?

Another economic question which is bound to arise immediately after the war — it is certain to be raised at the Peace Conference — is the question of the unequal distribution of wealth among nations. The Pope, the Archbishops, and the Moderator of the Free Church Council are at one in holding that extreme inequality in wealth and possessions should be abolished. The

British worker would agree with them as to the national wealth, though he might favour an amendment to omit the word 'extreme.' But would the average Englishman or American like to assimilate his standard of living to that of India or China, or even of Soviet Russia? According to Mr. Shelvankar in *The Problem of India* (Penguin edition), 'Very few of the agricultural and industrial workers in India earn more than 1/- or 1/6 a day. An average family of five persons in India has to make ends meet on one and threepence a day.' 'How do Indians exist,' he asks, 'if their individual earnings amount to no more than what even the poorest unemployed worker in England spends on beer and tobacco? The answer is simple: they exist in conditions of unspeakable squalor and ignorance and disease and starvation.' If the war ends in a victory for the Allied Nations and Democracy, a great, perhaps a preponderant, influence at the Peace Conference and in the post-war world will be wielded by the thousand million souls, about half the human species, who inhabit Russia, India and China.

The period out of which we are just emerging, the interlude between the wars, will, perhaps, be known as the epoch of the Social Services; perhaps it was not long enough to be called an epoch, it was more like a phase; it could not in the nature of things last long, and it did not last as long as it might have done; the world blundered into another war. The experiment could, perhaps, claim Apostolic authority. The propertied part of the Christian community at Jerusalem sold their lands and houses and laid the sum at the Apostles' feet. The Church at Jerusalem decided to live on its capital and trust that the Second Advent would come before it was exhausted. There was a brief period of almost idyllic happiness, hardly disturbed by the regrettable *contretemps* associated with the names of Ananias and Sapphira. Gradually the capital was exhausted, the Second Advent unaccountably delayed, the Church of Jerusalem became a baksheesh-hunting set of paupers, a nightmare to St. Paul.

It is often said that the failure of the Communist experiment proves that Communism is unworkable. It does nothing of the kind. Christian Communist institutions have flourished for centuries; they are called monasteries. They flourished because the abbots understood the difference between capital and interest. When a mediaeval landowner left lands or houses to a monastery, the abbot did not sell them and devote the proceeds to current expenses; he contented himself with the revenues. Our less worldly guides want us to go back to the methods of St. Peter, without his assurance that the end of all things is at hand. I do not think the Church would be well-advised to underwrite the shares of an earthly paradise.

The traveller from Gloucester to Birmingham by the Midland Railway sees what appears to be a chain of mountains; they are in fact a range of extinct volcanoes. Here in the fourteenth century an obscure clerk saw the vision of Piers Plowman:

> 'And marvellously we met, as I may you tell,
> All the wealth of the world and the woe both.'

Langland wrote when the Mediaeval Age was passing away. He ends with the Vision of Antichrist; a cold and comfortless conclusion, says his editor, it could not have been the real end of the poem. A lay member of the Malvern Conference says the Christian Church is weaker to-day than it ever was since it was founded. The Church, he says, fails in leadership because it shows no sign of having known despair. One-sided and ill-balanced as these utterances may be, there lies, perhaps, more hope in them than in the glib promises with which we are all too familiar in the utterances of our leaders in Church and State.

THE LAYMAN'S RIGHTS AND DUTIES

By Sir Francis Fremantle, O.B.E., M.D., F.R.C.P., M.P.

AT a time when no one can with any decency or comfort stand on his rights, it has seemed opportune for this conference to recognise the part which could properly be allotted to the laity, constituting the great mass of the Church; and how far they are equipped with rights and duties for the purpose. Clergy and faithful laity are not divided. In the immensity of the tasks opened to the Christian Church by the war, at home and abroad, there is no room for divided effort. We must understand each other; have our allotted tasks; mutual criticism must be friendly, modest and constructive; we must keep our eyes on the objective and go for it now for all we are worth.

We have to recognise the limitations both of clergy and laity. However deep and sincere his religion may be, it sits lightly on the layman, who is free in this land of the free not only to cultivate and educate his soul as he likes but also to speak, write and act freely in propagating his ideas for other souls, for the governance of the Church and for the conduct of the Christian campaign, regardless of his limited outlook. No penalties of Church or State await him, however unorthodox or mischievous he may be. Much temporary and superficial applause from certain sections of the public await his more explosive utterances and spectacular actions. And yet many of the foremost movements of Christendom have in

consequence of this freedom been due to the laity. And was not our Lord himself up to His death a layman in the Church of His fathers?

With the clergy, on the other hand, however deep and sincere their piety, however genuine their thought, however admirable their unselfish devotion and self-dedication to their mission in life, the facts and terms of their profession are inevitably something of a straight-jacket; they are necessarily tied and bound by the declarations to which they have subscribed and the rules of the office they hold; and still more by the reactions of their flock and of the world outside it to any suggestion of unfaithfulness and disloyalty to the Church in one of the Church's officers. 'Who was it who preached?' asked a sight-seer in Canterbury Cathedral after Matins some sixty years ago. 'Canon Fremantle,' said my mother. 'Ah!' was the exasperated reply, 'I thought it was that rascally Judas.'

But there is without doubt a gulf fixed between clergy and laity which we must bridge. The little girl who was asked to describe the difference between saints and martyrs, expressed a partial truth when she declared that saints are very, very good and holy men, and martyrs are those who have to live with them. 'That's us!' remarked the hard-worked parson's wife to her husband. And there is a flicker of truth in the implied or imagined gulf between the proverbial parson and layman and lay woman. The differing interests and outlook on life would irritate them both at close quarters; it might lead to awkward reconsiderations of principle and action, to convictions against their equilibrium of thought and life; they had better keep apart and only pass the time of day, the cricket news or war news, when they meet. Hence the gulf — from school-days on. We must bridge it.

Laity and Church Law.

It is the natural struggle of every profession to be free of control. The clericals have always been demanding it, as will have been seen in Mr. Bezzant's paper on 'Church and State.' But the Ecclesiastical Courts are an instance of fruitful co-operation in the layman's service to the Church. Mr. Robert C. Nesbitt read a most useful paper on the subject to our Cambridge Conference in 1935, showing the value of these courts for law and order within the Church, with constructive suggestions for their improvement. The Archdeacon's Court has fallen into disuse. But in the Consistory Court of a diocese, in the Provincial Court—the Canterbury Court of Arches and the Chancery Court of York — and finally in the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, it is the layman, as lawyer, who interprets the law of the Church. Meanwhile the Con-

vocations, after two centuries' suppression, were revived in 1854 and 1861 without any added authority.

The Church Assembly.

This brings us to the 'Church of England Assembly (Powers) Act,' the Enabling Act, as it is called, passed by Parliament on the 23rd of December, 1919, largely owing to the wise and patient statesmanship of Archbishops Davidson and Lang. The Convocations had long recognized that, while they could enact Canons binding upon the faithful, they lacked the laity in their enactment and the Canons had no statutory force. Parliamentary management of the Church had broken down. In twenty-five years before the last war, 183 Church Bills were scrapped; Parliament had no time for them. In 1885 Convocation instituted a House of Laymen in an advisory capacity, thus forming a Representative Church Council; in 1914, the Central Board of Finance; and by 1920 the Church Assembly was in full swing with legislative powers. With an Upper House of 43 Bishops, a House of 342 Clergy and a House of 345 Laity, it is seen how great an accession of power has been secured to the layman. Its enactments are called Measures. Any dealing with doctrinal matters can only be introduced, and amendments must be approved by the Bishops. Otherwise the three Houses are of equal status; any one of them can secure the rejection of a Measure by its adverse vote. Every Measure is debated for General Approval; goes to a Committee, if required, for consideration in detail; is discussed for revision and is finally submitted to the Assembly for Final Approval. If approved, it is trimmed up legally by the Legislative Committee and submitted by them to Parliament. Parliament appoints an Ecclesiastical Committee of 15 Peers and 15 Commoners, from all parties, Nonconformists included, to consider Measures and report to each House of Parliament 'its views as to the expediency thereof, especially with relation to the constitutional rights of His Majesty's subjects.' Parliament may then debate, pass or reject the Measure; it may not amend it.

In the first eighteen years of its existence the Church Assembly has secured the Royal Assent to no less than 73 Measures; only the Prayer-Book Measure and two others have been rejected by Parliament. This is no meagre record for such a body corporate in its infancy. The Church Self-Government League and other bodies from many angles will continue to press for greater freedom. I hope latitude will be allowed in revision of the Prayer Book. But in effect the Church is now able to tackle any other of the anomalies or abuses that have discredited or impeded her in her great mission without further hindrance.

The Parochial Church Council.

The question to be faced is how far the Church is properly represented by the Church Assembly. Its basis lies in the parish and the Electoral Roll of all baptized persons over 18 years of age claiming membership of the Church of England and not of any religious body out of communion with her. This is probably the only practical basis for the present. We must aim at securing that inter-communicant basis on sound foundations and meanwhile be thankful that the baptismal basis was accepted, rather than the communicant, with its possible corruption.

The laity of a parish meet annually to elect a Parochial Church Council, whose primary duty it is 'to co-operate with the incumbent in the initiation, conduct and development of Church work, both within the parish and outside.' The minister of a parish is in the chair. Otherwise it is a lay body, still in its infancy. We must urge on the laity their duty to make far more use than at present of their powers in and through the Parochial Church Council. Confirmation candidates, before or after Confirmation, should be instructed accordingly. It is a great democratic advance. It is through these powers that the laity can pull their full weight in the great opportunities now open to the Church. The Parochial Church Council has important powers, not only as to repair of chancels, sale of parsonage, dilapidations, parochial registers, clergy pensions and finance, but also as to union of benefices, transfer and purchase of advowsons, and appointment of their own parish priest.[1]

The Diocesan Conference.

The Parochial Church Council elects one or more lay representatives (say one for every 300 names on the Roll) to the Diocesan Conference, equal in number to the clergy; and there again they have considerable powers, especially in its Standing, Finance and other Committees and Boards in debate, although the Bishop's address, however controversial, can hardly be discussed. The lay element is strengthened by the statutory inclusion of not more than fifteen teachers or students, selected by the Conference, and up to ten persons appointed by the Bishop.

Alternatively, the lay members of the Diocesan Conference may be recruited from grouped parishes or through the Ruri-decanal Conferences to which they appoint their representatives. But such indirect methods only separate still further the electorate from the executive of the diocese.

[1] *Church Assembly Handbook*, 1s.; *Churchman's Handbook*, 1s.

The Chain from Parishioner to Assembly.

Finally, the Diocesan Conference elects every five years to the Chamber of Laity of the Church Assembly by the methods of proportional representation. Thus, by the cumbrous machinery of a most circuitous route, the more conspicuous and available supporters of every school of thought, or none, within the Church can and generally do win through from the parishes to the Church Assembly. The defects are obvious, although at this stage of the Church's history, in my opinion, inevitable. Any direct general election by the parochial electors, on parliamentary lines, is impracticable. Few even of those now serving on the Church Assembly would submit themselves to the labours and cost, the unpleasantness and self-advertisement, of a popular election. When I was a medical student at Guy's Hospital, the Rector of Southwark was elected by popular vote, and we in Guy's laughed merrily over the public-houses filled with voters imported for the occasion. Not only would an unsatisfactory Chamber be elected, but the elected members could not be expected to keep in touch with their scattered constituents, as an M.P. tries to do.

On the other hand, much more should be done to make the chain live between the parochial elector and his, very indirect, representatives in the Assembly. The Assembly is the mouthpiece of the Church, the headquarters of its forces, the central agency for helping its units in their work, and for mobilising its resources for its spiritual work at home and overseas. The Diocesan Conference is in some respects the Local Authority of the Church. The electors have a right to know, and it would stimulate them to know, the Measures being discussed, both in the Diocesan Conference and in the Assembly, the assistance aimed at for clergy and their dependents, the work constantly pursued for education, for training of ordinands, for curates and lay-workers, for care of churches, for central charities, for missionary and evangelical work; how their money is spent; how moral and other problems are discussed; how the most extreme views are expressed and met; and with what consummate art, humour and wisdom the Archbishops — and, at least, in the St. Albans Diocese, the Bishop — preside over their respective Assemblies. Incidentally, an M.P. feels the Church Assembly should have an independent Speaker. But neither the late nor the present Archbishop agreed when I suggested it to each in private.

The representatives should be urged between them to give an account of the proceedings in each Session of the Assembly to the next meeting of the Diocesan Conference; those from the latter body to the Parochial Church Council; and addresses should be

given on these several bodies and their proceedings to the regular congregations in the services of the Church. It all comes back to the real feeling of the Christian laity for their Church. Where there's a will there's a way. Hitherto the way has not been open to them, and the laity have little will to help outside their special, mainly secular, interests.

The Laity and Finance.

In the secular sphere, however, the laity, with a few business-minded clerics, have done yeoman service, especially in law, in finance, and in the management of agricultural and housing estates. Queen Anne's Bounty, since 1704, and the Ecclesiastical Commission, since 1836, have been steadily increasing clerical incomes and improving the Church's buildings and machinery, administering the Tithe Act of 1925, and managing great agricul-cultural and housing estates and other property; and these bodies, including all the diocesan bishops and, in Queen Anne's Bounty, 700 Governors, are mainly and soundly managed on high principles by laymen of wisdom and experience. Diocesan and parochial finance is increasingly in lay hands. Edward Lutyens' Church House in Dean's Yard, opened by their Majesties in 1939 in the beautiful Central Hall, which was shattered in the blitz within a year, was a monument of commercial, artistic and reverent wisdom by the late Bishop Partridge and a few laymen, two of whom were killed in the House at the same time.

Election of Bishops.

It is seen, then, what great opportunities are available for the laity; and it has been suggested that the bishops should be elected by them and only thereafter consecrated by the clergy, as was indeed the practice in the first five centuries of the Church. But this procedure is in fact the English practice, since the King appoints on the advice of his Ministers. Heaven preserve us from an election of bishops merely by the clergy, or even by the Church Assembly. In British affairs, as in sport, we want an independent tribunal or referee to decide the most contentious and critical issues.

The Laity and Spiritual Work.

Such then is the place of the layman in the machinery of the Church. What share can he take in its spiritual work? Last year the House of Laity resolved that the laity should take a greater part in the spiritual work 'in order to assist the bishops and clergy in their fight to maintain and extend the Christian character of the

nation.' In February last year the whole Assembly agreed. And indeed the work of lay-readers, lay-missionaries, the Church Army, and of women in various rôles, especially that of the parson's wife, is to be warmly commended. In the Bunbury diocese, S.W. Australia, the lay-workers of the Bush-Brotherhood give invaluable and vitally necessary help. The mission-field is a shining example of laity working as doctors, nurses, teachers, artisans. But the *Christian News-Letter* last month called attention to the distinctive contribution to be made by the lay-preacher, not as a cheap and inferior substitute minister, but for the full interpretation of the Gospel in concerns and ways of which they have, and the parson has not, practical experience. Such more particularly now is the contribution required from natural science.

The Laity and Science.

The achievements of physical engineering hold a predominant place in our thoughts of the war; and for the past century the discoveries of physics and chemistry and of their application to the living creation and the whole universe have developed the public impression that they alone are of importance and presumably can account for the whole of life and creation through the ages. When agnosticism and atheism are openly professed by many of the most brilliant writers and speakers and wireless entertainers, is it not clear that public opinion in all classes is unconsciously drawn into the same net? Religion appears intangible, imaginary, a pastime for women, children and pussyfoots.

Believe me, Rome *is* burning; Christianity *is* at stake. We must diagnose the cause; and I venture to say we have not done so. Social services and a good-neighbour policy at home and abroad are preached and accepted, both in civilian and ecclesiastical circles, on ethical grounds, even if in the Christian name. This may be merely an intelligent form of selfishness, the 'higher selfishness,' we may call it. But that certainly is not the Christian principle, which offers the innumerable examples of utterly unselfish sacrificing courage in great things and small, at home and in the fighting in this war. What is the missing motive in ethics and in our general life? Religion, is the common reply—not only of religious people. But after the stirring 'Appeal to all Christian people' of the Lambeth Conference of 1920, after all the appeals and all the magnificent work put into the great Christian gatherings of recent years and to the current opportunities of the several churches, why has the apparent response been so pathetically small? Is it the inevitable reaction of the limited human soul? I do not believe it. The trouble has not been probed to the bottom.

Layman's Solution.

The layman can probe freely where the cleric cannot. May I suggest certain points leading to the bridge over this gulf which separates the masses from the Church.

First. Science holds truth as an absolute obligation and the search for it as her right and duty. Every hypothesis must be verified or its limitations of fact allowed for. She believes in the unity and continuity of Creation. Miracles are subjects not for awe but for enquiry.

Secondly. Religion must admit that theological statements, involving spiritual matters, cannot be made in material terms and can only be presented by symbol or parable. 'Belief' in the Creeds cannot honestly be expressed by Science, except in so far as 'belief' would apply to an art-gallery or the principles of the Beveridge Report. Religious truths can only be pictures of the truth.

Thirdly. Armed with these concessions to Science, Religion should bravely challenge her to state how she accounts for the will of man, which is the paramount ruler of every machine and so of the world; for free choice; for the senses of beauty and happiness; for love and hatred, for life itself; for the origin of life, when it is traced back by evolution to its simplest and earliest form. These manifestations are surely no products of material energy; but expressions of an immaterial factor which we call Spirit.

Fourthly. Science may well be asked if she has been right to confine her outlook to the world as explained through the five senses of man, principally to things directly or indirectly visible, audible or tangible. These are held to constitute the material world. But I urge on Science that psychology, physiology, zoology cannot be explained within these limits; that living contacts and repulsions are essentially independent of material channels and are quite inexplicable except by some immaterial factors. This surely is the doctrine of the Spirit on which religion must be founded.

Fifthly. If God created man in His own image (*Gen.* i, 27), we must conversely so imagine God as a person, with all the qualities and sensibilities of ourselves in superlative degree, as the supreme and universal Power—to use the scientific term—with the characteristics which are lacking in any material source of power, but are obviously the essentials of life. It is more scientific then to conceive God as a Person than as the Universal Power. Religion starts with God as an axiom, Science with Power as an axiom. We must and can equalise the two.

Sixthly. God then contains the source of both good and evil, the constructive and destructive forces; as in a parallelogram of forces, the resultant will swerve towards the good or the evil according to their relative energies in each unit—in Creation or in Man. This alone gives an explanation of why God has allowed this war or any suffering or other evil to happen. The common explanations do not satisfy the lay mind. The fact is, God is eternally at war with the Devil—the personification of the destructive or evil forces—and we have got to help Him in the fight. It is our faith that God will triumph; and this must depend—like the war itself—on the utmost dedication and service of each one of us in the ranks.

Seventhly. Let me urge that this vision of the Truth reveals to us the true Incarnation, which Christ was trying to teach—the fact of 'the true Light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world' (*John* i, 9), which was the essence both of human life and of the Deity—that continuity between spatial earth and heaven of which Jacob dreamed at Bethel and of which Christ was the archetype, and that Christ must be preached as a true Man like ourselves and that we, like Him, are of the same stuff as of Him and of God. We have to break down the idea of God as in a different sphere to our own; Jupiter of the thunderbolts or Jehovah, the God of wrath, on His judgment-seat in a spatially separate heaven. God is in us from birth; and we switch Heaven on to us by Prayer, Meditation and Sacrament.

That no doubt has been the basic idea of God in all countries and ages; and the early Christians had to find some way of expressing the divinity in the dead Christ, whom they and others had known as the man Jesus. Hence the suggestions as to His birth, resurrection and ascension, which to us on the other hand would prove that He was not Very Man of Very Man. And yet these dogmas are the lynch-pins of the religion of a major part of Christianity, especially in the mission-field. They are pictures that we know and love. The world is not yet ready to receive the naked truth; and so, like our Lord, we must continue to speak to the world in parables and dogmas, and show our active Christian faith in our lives.

But to those who have ears to hear, let us speak with no uncertain voice. The Church must not run away from this basic disease, which is eating into the heart and life of modern man. The Archbishop has shown great courage; the Commission on Doctrine in its Report in 1938 showed courage; the Commission on Church and State in 1935 showed courage. We want more courage in facing and stating the truth with all understanding,

charity and tact, in season and not out of season, in and according to our several vocations and callings. A great opportunity has come to us in the Education Bill; for the focus of our efforts must be the rising and future generations, who must be trained in the truth, comfort and beauty of the religion of Jesus of Nazareth, the Christ and Messiah of a mangled and storm-tossed world.

I have been steeped in this faith from early days, through scientific and medical training and work, in peace and war, through political and ecclesiastical service, in home, both in town and village life. I owe much to Jowett, Rashdall, to many struggling theologians, to Canon Major, and to Streeter's *Reality*—the fairest effort I know to meet the proper claims of Science. I have found a similar approach to the gulf in the books of Eddington[2] and Jeans,[3] and in three recent books by eminent surgeons, Alexis Carrel,[4] Kenneth Walker[5] and Wilfred Trotter.[6]. But my main recourse is to two small books by my father, Dean Fremantle, *The Gospel of the Secular Life*[7] and *Natural Christianity*[8]—such a handbook as is sorely now needed by the young men and women, at home and overseas.

But finally, let us who approach the old faith with the dissecting knife at least avoid the use of axes and hammers; let us keep our eyes on the ultimate object of recruiting men and women to the whole Army of God, to increase their numbers and quality, not to replace them, however strange and unsuitable their uniforms, so long as their hearts are of gold, their loyalty to our Master, our Commander-in-Chief, unquestioned. We of the laity are 'a royal priesthood' (*1 Pet.* ii, 9), with our own commissions in that Army. Let us rise to the task and seize the present brilliant opportunity.

I would end with a tribute to the supreme poet of our modern faith, with his sense of proportion, his love of life and all things beautiful, physician, churchman, author of the *Testament of Beauty*, the late poet-laureate, Dr. Robert Bridges, O.M.[9]

> 'Keenly rejoicing in all that wisdom approves, nor allowing
> Ourselves at the challenge of younger craft to be outsailed;
> But trimming our old canvas in all change of weather and wind,
> Freely without fear urge o'erseas our good vessel onward,
> Piloting into the far, unmappèd futurity.—Farewell.'

[2] *The Nature of the Physical World.* Cambridge University Press, 1933.
[3] *The Mysterious Universe.* Cambridge University Press, 1930.
[4] *Man the Unknown.* Hamish Hamilton, 1935.
[5] *Diagnosis of Man.* Jonathan Cape, 1942.
[6] *Instincts of the Herd in Peace and War.* Ernest Benn, 1916.
[7] W. H. Fremantle's *Gospel of the Secular Life.* Cassell & Co., 1884.
[8] W. H. Fremantle's *Natural Christianity.* Harper Bros., 1911.
[9] Poetical Works of Robert Bridges, 1936; Epistle I, 'Wintry Delights,' p. 422.

IN MEMORIAM—SIR FRANCIS FREMANTLE

Sir Francis Fremantle, O.B.E., D.M., M.P., author of 'The Layman's Rights and Duties' (published in this issue), died on August 26th. He was the son of the Very Rev. and Hon. W. H. Fremantle, Dean of Ripon, a distinguished member of the Modern Churchmen's Union and a well-known religious writer, who delivered a notable course of Bampton Lectures in 1883 dealing with the social and political implications of the Christian Religion.

Francis Fremantle shared his father's religious convictions and outlook and was a strong supporter of the aims of the Modern Churchmen's Union, being when he died a member of its Council. Educated at Eton and Balliol, he entered Guy's Hospital as a medical student and qualified as B.M. Oxon in 1898. He saw much medical service abroad, being a civil surgeon in the South African War, Plague Officer in India (1903-4), Special Correspondent to the *Lancet* in the Russo-Japanese War, D.A.D.M.S. in Gallipoli, Egypt and Mesopotamia in the Great War.

In England, his main medical interest was Public Health. He served as County Medical Officer of Health for Hertfordshire and held this post until 1916, when he became Consulting Medical Officer of Health. He was a member of the Industrial Health Research Board in 1930-34, a member of the Departmental Commission on Rent Restriction Acts in 1923, 1931, and 1937, and on the Midwives Act (1908), and a member of the Central Housing Advisory Committee on the Ministry of Health and of the Interdepartmental Committee on Nursing Service. In 1920 he was President of the Incorporated Society of Medical Officers of Health, in 1928 President of the Section of Epidemiology and State Medicine of the Royal Society of Medicine, and Fellow and Vice-President of the Royal Sanitary Institute. He was the author of a number of medical treatises dealing with various aspects of his work and experience. He sat as conservative M.P. for St. Albans from 1919 until his death, having inherited the family estate of Bedwell Park in the vicinity of St. Albans.

Sir Francis Fremantle was a strong believer in maintaining close relations between Church and State, and regarded Establishment as the best means to that end. Kind-hearted, courteous, philanthropic, possessed of wide experience and sound judgment, he was a valued friend and deservedly popular in many circles. It would be hard to find a more practical, understanding and dutiful member of the Church of England. He will be greatly missed

in the Modern Churchmen's Union; for, like Sir Arnold Wilson and Sir Bunnell Burton, fellow-members of that Society, who have died since the outbreak of the war, he represents a type of Christian layman whose understanding, loyalty and many-sided service Church and Nation can ill-afford to lose.

H.D.A.M.

CORRESPONDENCE

To the Editor of *The Modern Churchman*

WHY ARE THE JEWS NOT LOVED?

SIR,

Our attention has been drawn to a review of our book, *The Jew in the Christian World,* published in the *Modern Churchman* of June, 1943. We are not concerned to refute the criticisms contained in this review, but we do wish to make perfectly clear to your readers that the personal prejudices of the reviewer are quite incompatible with any attitude that can be called Christian. In particular we are amazed that the final paragraph, in which the writer apparently regards with equanimity the disappearance or destruction of the Jewish people, should have been allowed to appear in print in a Church magazine. The author rejects our diagnosis of the Jewish question as fundamentally religious, but he does not think it worth while to mention his reason for doing so. If however the secular view of the problem leads to such conclusions as these, it is only a further proof of the importance of a religious approach. Only a strong Christian conviction will preserve us from natural prejudices against the Jews and give us a sense of their place in the divine plan.

One point of fact must be corrected. Mr. Kosmala is not a converted Jew, but, as stated in the preface, a German of Polish descent.

ROBT. SMITH,
HANS KOSMALA.

42 Frederick Street, Edinburgh.
24th July, 1943.

[We have received letters complaining of the anti-Semitic tone of the review signed R. P. Smythe and entitled 'Why are the Jews not loved?' Our correspondents, in most cases, ask whether the anti-Semitic views expressed in the review are those of the Editor of the *Modern Churchman.* We take this opportunity of stating that while the Editor is responsible personally for the views expressed in all editorials and also for the line taken in all articles, a much larger freedom is properly permitted in the case of reviews and correspondence. Reviewers must be granted a very large measure of freedom if their reviews are to carry weight with our readers. With only one exception, our correspondents, while reprobating the review entitled 'Why are the Jews not loved?' make no reference whatsoever to the item of correspondence entitled 'Why we ought to love the Jews' which immediately follows the review. This sequence is not accidental, but was due to editorial design, and the title of the second item was contributed by the Editor himself.—ED., *M.C.*]

We regret that we have been unable to find space for a large mass of correspondence.—ED. *M.C.*